

# Huskers Illustrated



**NEWS  
PLEASE RUSH**

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## Huskers Pass Test

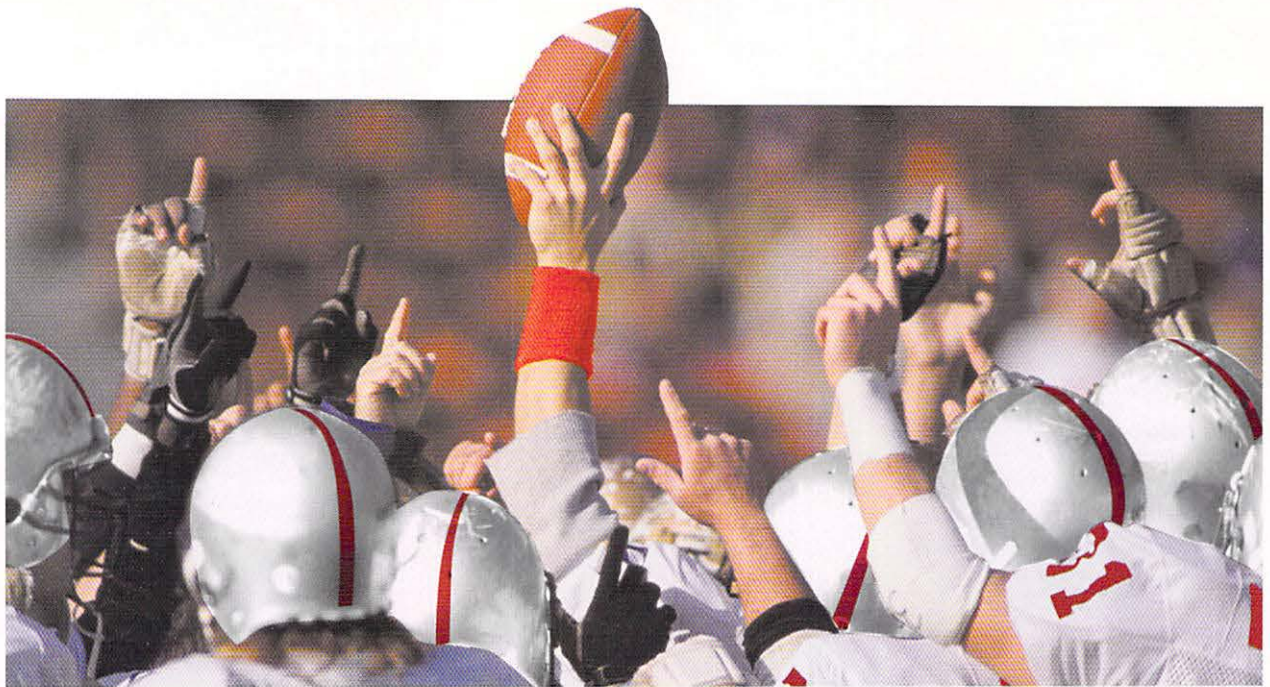
### Sooners Next





**champion** (chăm'pē-on)

*n.* 1. A winner of first place in a competition. 2. One who shows marked superiority.



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## Streaks Collide

*Neither team impressive  
in tuneups for this week's showdown*



**Brian Hill**

IT SEEMS LIKE old times.

For the second straight season, Nebraska and Oklahoma will both be rated in the top three in the country when they meet.

Last season in Norman, the Huskers came in rated No. 1, and the Sooners were third. Oklahoma spotted Nebraska a 14-0 first quarter lead before winning 31-14.

This time, the Sooners will be rated No. 2 and the Huskers No. 3, barring surprises when the new polls come out this week.

One long streak will also come to an end.

Defending national champion Oklahoma owns the nation's longest winning streak at 20 games. With Oregon losing on Saturday, Nebraska now has the longest home winning streak at 19.

In the unpredictable world of college football, the latter streak was in doubt for much of what was expected to be a tuneup for the Huskers when they played host to Texas Tech.

Although they wouldn't admit to looking ahead, things just didn't seem quite right for the Huskers, starting with Wes Welker's 85-yard punt return for a touchdown that gave the Red Raiders a 7-0 lead before the visitors ran a play from scrimmage.

Perhaps Nebraska's 56-3 romp last year in Lubbock had something to do with it also. Texas Tech, coming off a victory over Kansas State, didn't play like a 26-point underdog and gave the Huskers all they could handle most of

the way on a beautiful Saturday night.

The Sooners were almost as underwhelming, scoring just six points in the second half of a 33-17 win over Baylor in Norman. Nebraska defeated Baylor 48-7 a week earlier in Waco.

While Nebraska's defensive performance against Texas Tech will no doubt be a serious concern for Husker fans this week, Oklahoma's offense would be the topic in Norman.

Although sophomore Jason White passed for 343 yards and a touchdown in his first start, he was sacked eight times for 66 yards in losses by the Baylor defense. That left the Sooners with a net of 60 yards in rushing offense.



Oklahoma's strength is its defense, which has allowed its seven opponents to rush for an average of 103.4 yards per game. Nebraska leads the nation in rushing offense at 338.4 yards per game.

One of the key components of Nebraska's running game is 6-foot-4, 340-pound guard Toniou Fonoti. The junior from Hauula, Hawaii, is the subject of our feature story in this week's edition.

Our profile subject is cornerback Lornell McPherson, part of Nebraska's secondary rotation, which will be tested by a strong passing offense for the second straight game.

You'll also find much, much more about the Huskers' 41-31 struggle with Texas Tech and the highly anticipated showdown with Oklahoma.

Whatever the outcome of this week's game and a possible rematch for the Big 12 championship Dec. 1 in Irving, Texas, it's sad to think that the teams won't meet again in the regular season until 2004. Nebraska's South Division opponents the next two years will be Oklahoma State, Texas and Texas A&M.

That's just the way it is for the two old rivals who played 71 consecutive seasons before a two-year hiatus in 1998-99.

That's too bad, so enjoy this one. ■

## Huskers Illustrated

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## ON THE COVER

Nebraska quarterback Eric Crouch passed for three touchdowns in the first half against Texas Tech. Photo by Scott Bruhn



# Huskers Illustrated CONTENTS

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14

## 14 Relentless

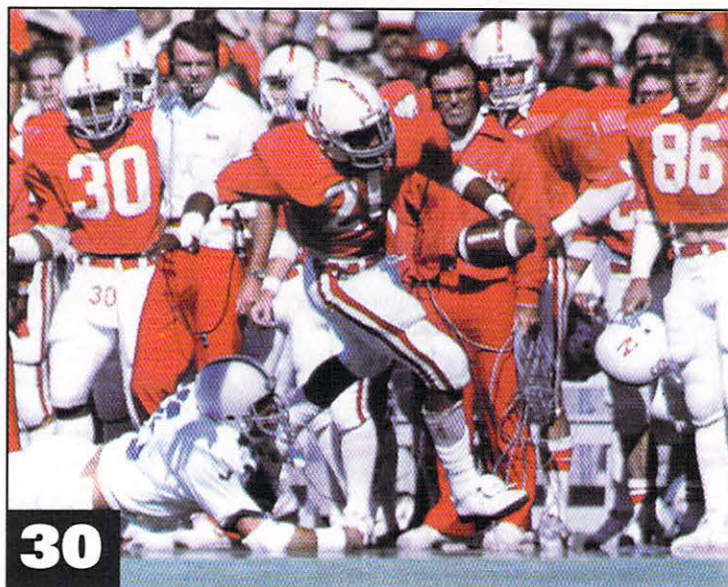
Nebraska junior guard and honors candidate Toni Fonoti says his father taught him to "be tough and just keep going." By Mike Babcock

## NEXT ISSUE

The review of the Oklahoma game will be mailed Oct. 29.

## DEPARTMENTS

<b>Letter From The Editor</b> .....	4
<b>NU Notebook</b> .....	6
<i>The standard by which college quarterbacks are most often measured remains passing ability.</i>	
<b>State Of The Huskers</b> .....	8
<i>Experiences on the track have given Husker safety Jerrell Pippens the persistence to succeed.</i>	
<b>From The West</b> .....	10
<i>A new scheme, better blocking and a new deep back have all contributed to improvement on kickoff returns.</i>	
<b>From The Beat</b> .....	12
<i>A big-play defense makes Oklahoma almost as dangerous without the football as when they have it.</i>	
<b>Profile</b> .....	18
<i>Not getting the number he wanted didn't seem as important when Lornell McPherson earned a Blackshirt.</i>	
<b>Texas Tech Game Recap</b> .....	21
<b>4th and Inches</b> .....	25
<b>Scouting Report</b> .....	26
<b>Texas Tech Game Statistics</b> .....	28
<b>Great Games at Memorial Stadium</b> .....	30
<i>Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne admitted he was embarrassed by his team's 1-2 start in 1981.</i>	
<b>Where Are They Now?</b> .....	34
<i>The chemistry matched the talent on Nebraska's 1970 and 1971 national championship teams.</i>	
<b>Side Out</b> .....	36
<i>The switch from side-out scoring to rally scoring has made for closer games for the Husker volleyball team.</i>	
<b>Grid Recruiting</b> .....	40
<i>Athletes who visited for the Notre Dame game Sept. 8 continue to weigh their options.</i>	
<b>Crossword Puzzle, Huskernutz</b> .....	44
<b>Final Word</b> .....	46



30



# Passing Grades

Although mobility and running ability are appreciated in college quarterbacks, the standard by which they are most often measured remains passing ability. All-America quarterbacks have traditionally been those with gaudy passing statistics. And that doesn't appear to be changing.

For every Tommie Frazier who earns consensus All-America honors, there are a half-dozen or more Joey Hamiltons, Chris Weinkes, Gino Torrettas and Danny Wuerffels.

It has been that way pretty much since the 1930s, when Davey O'Brien and Sammy Baugh were flinging footballs — or at least since 1965, when NCAA rules allowed two-platoon play.

The National Football League influences such thinking. Pro quarterbacks all are passers. But there might be more to it than that, according to Nebraska receivers coach Ron Brown.

"It maybe has something to do with the human psyche, that we like flamboyance," he said. "We like the quick fix. That's something very noticeable in society, how quickly we like things done."

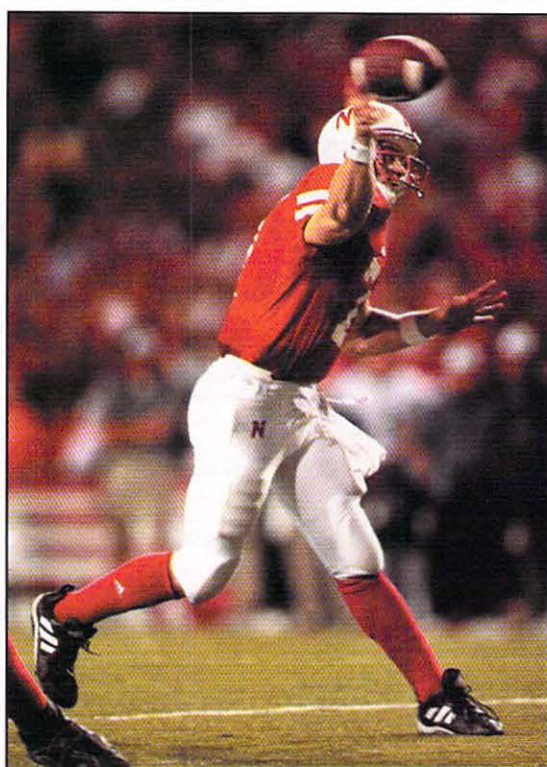
Passing accomplishes that in at least two ways.

One, it provides greater big-play potential than running. "You can get some high-scoring, exciting stuff in the passing game," said Brown. "That draws the fans, gets everybody pumped up."

And two, a passing offense can be more easily developed. Coaches trying to effect a quick turnaround in a program typically look for swift receivers and a quarterback who can throw.

If a new coach comes in and says "we're going to hammer, we're going to come in and run it, I'll tell you what, that takes a lot of time, two to three years to get that team together," Brown said.

To establish a running game where passing has been the norm requires teaching linemen to fire off the ball and maintain proper pad level. It requires developing toughness and a willing-



Nebraska senior quarterback Eric Crouch displays his passing form.

ness to block down field in wide receivers. And it requires running backs willing to go into contact.

And none of that "is as easy as it appears," said Brown. "To be a great running football team takes tremendous dedication. It really takes a mindset that breeds toughness and aggressiveness. It takes a while to get that across to kids, and you'll find that really with linemen a lot."

Another advantage to developing a passing game is that "you can really work on throwing the ball all year round in a lot of places," Brown said. At the high school level "in the southwest part of the country they have these passing leagues that go on a good portion of the summer."

"They'll play numbers and numbers of games in the summer where there's no equipment; they can just go out there and run routes. You can always get a quarterback and a receiver. All you need is a ball and you can go run routes and the quarterback can throw to you."

A running game isn't so easily prac-

ticed. "You can't do that in the off-season very well," said Brown. "But I think people get pretty proficient at throwing because they have easy accessibility to it. The passing game is something you can work on all year. It doesn't tax you that much."

A wide-open passing attack can be a great equalizer for a less talented team.

"You look at some of these teams that just can't recruit the big linemen or the great I-backs and it's tough for them to run that hard-hitting, physical kind of offense," Brown said.

"But, boy, everybody can throw the ball. They can develop schemes and they can pick routes. They can do all kinds of things. They can have a hurry-up offense that's exciting to the fans. It gives them the chance to equalize the game a little bit. It keeps them in the game."

To get over the hump, however, even a passing team has to be able to run, he said.

Finding a quarterback with Eric Crouch's skills, one that can run the option and has sufficient size to play at the major college level, is difficult. Most programs are looking to recruit quarterbacks that can throw and read defenses. Nebraska asks its quarterbacks to do three things.

"We ask our quarterbacks to do a lot more than the so-called excellent quarterbacks across the country. And they are," said Cornhusker quarterbacks coach Turner Gill. "But you run 15 to 20 times down field and all of a sudden you come back and you've got to throw the ball. You get gassed out. You get tired. You've still got to be in condition to do those things. Plus, you're taking a few licks."

As for the inclination to regard passing as the standard for quarterbacks, that's a function of statistics, according to Gill. "You can really see the passing game a lot more," he said.

"A guy running the football, he's going to have to rush for 1,000 (yards) and probably throw for 1,000, 1,500 or 2,000, something like that, to really stick out." ■



## MR. TOUCHDOWN

Former Cornhusker rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch is playing well for the Arizona Cardinals in his rookie NFL season. That's no surprise to linebacker Jamie Burrow.

The two were members of the same recruiting class, but Vanden Bosch played as a true freshman while Burrow redshirted. "Definitely, Kyle was intense out there," Burrow said.

"He was 100 percent focused, all the time. He had a straight path to his goal. I meander around a little toward mine. Kyle sets his goals, and he's going to attain them."

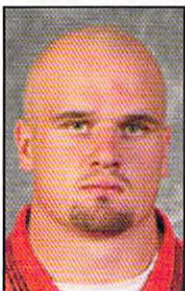
Vanden Bosch was that way from the beginning. The two were roommates as freshmen. "I'd go play video games or something, come back at 9:30 or 10 o'clock and Kyle was asleep," said Burrow.

"That's why he did so much better than me in school that freshman year."

Both were excellent students, however, and Burrow has already finished his degree.

Vanden Bosch returned a fumble 9 yards for a touchdown in the Cardinals' recent 21-20 victory against the Eagles in Philadelphia. The Cardinals had lost nine in row over two seasons.

Former Cornhusker fullback Joel Makovicka also scored a touchdown for the Cardinals.

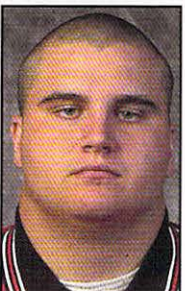


Kyle Vanden Bosch

## ANOTHER HOCHSTEIN

Center John Garrison is generously listed at 285 pounds, and even that isn't particularly heavy for offensive linemen these days. But anything the junior from Blue Springs, Mo. might lack because of weight he more than makes up for with intensity and playing proper techniques.

"He gets a lot of things done," said senior guard Jon Rutherford, who has played every position in the interior of the line during his career. "His motor goes 100 miles an hour all the time."



John Garrison

According to Rutherford, Garrison's intensity is comparable to that of former Cornhusker Russ Hochstein, a two-time, first-team all-conference guard now playing in the NFL.

When Hochstein was a sophomore, "I think he only weighed 260 or 270," Rutherford said. "He was going against guys that were 300, and he'd block them. It looked like he was running into a brick wall with a full head of steam. That's the kind of attitude Garrison has, I think."

"He's going to get the job done no matter what it takes." ■

# QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

## NEW LOOKS

With the Oklahoma game drawing near, Coach Frank Solich was asked if he were inclined to keep elements of the offense under wraps or show new wrinkles, presumably so that the Sooners would have more with which to be concerned in their defensive preparations.

As for adding too many new things to the offense, "the thing you've got to guard against is getting too carried away to the point where you're not executing," he said.

In order to be effective, an offense must execute, he said, "and a lot of that comes down to reps, everybody just knowing what they're doing and getting enough practice at it."

"So there's a fine line between adding a lot of things that are a little bit different for an opponent and having them work and maybe just adding to much to where it maybe hurts you."

"We're always studying an opponent on film and from that do a few things different. But will we come up with an entire set or something that hasn't been used before? You've got to be careful on that end, unless you're willing to drop some things that are already in your offense."

## IN ONE EAR, AND OUT

Quarterback Eric Crouch has rewritten the Cornhusker record book for quarterbacks and he still has four regular-season games to play, and possibly a fifth in the Big 12 championship game.

(Bowl game statistics are separate from career statistics).

"Normally when I hear those things, they kind of go in one ear and out the other," said Crouch. "It's just something I'm not trying to really think about. It's brought to my attention more by peers and family members and friends, media, those types of things."

"Somebody asked me if I knew how many records or how many touchdowns I had this year, and my response was, 'I really don't know.' It's not something I think about. I just try to go out and play."

## TAKE YOUR PICK

Solich was recently asked to compare Crouch's 95-yard touchdown run against Missouri this season with Tommie Frazier's 75-yard touchdown run against Florida in the 1996 Fiesta Bowl game. "If you're on the right side of them, they're both great," Solich said.

"They're the same because the ball gets put in the end zone. I think Tommie's probably showed power as he broke through several guys that had shots at him at the same time. Eric's showed great movement and change of direction and acceleration coming off of those cuts."

"They were different types of runs, but the end result was the same."

## LOCKDOWN MODE

After the Iowa State game, defensive coordinator Craig Bohl said cornerbacks Keyuo Craver and DeJuan Groce had been in lockdown mode. Bohl subsequently explained. "We play a lot of man-to-man defense and a lot of times what we tell those two guys when they get off the bus at the stadium is, 'You've got that guy. You've got that guy. We'll see you at the end of the game.'"

Craver and Groce, who suffered bruised ribs against the Cyclones, "have been playing with a great deal of confidence," said Bohl. "The time that the ball has been thrown in their area, on their man, I can't recall very many times where somebody has come up with a completion."

"I think Coach (George) Darlington and Coach (Jimmy) Burrow are really doing a great job with the techniques with those guys. They're playing very well."

## SOFTBALL JERSEY RETIRED

The Nebraska softball team made a memorable debut on its new field Oct. 12, holding an alumni reunion to retire Julie Geis' jersey and splitting a double-header against Washington with a 5-4 victory and a 7-3 loss on the first night of the Husker Fall Classic.

The Huskers welcomed more than 50 alumni back to honor Geis. A four-year letter-winner at NU, Geis was a victim of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York City, where she was working in the south tower of the World Trade Center during a week-long business trip. Geis' jersey was the third one retired in the history of the program, joining Lori Sippel and Denise Day.

The emotional ceremony was precluded by the Huskers' first contest on the Haymarket Park softball diamond, Nebraska's new home for the 2001-2002 season. ■



## He's Come A Long Way

*Experiences on the track give Husker safety Pippens the persistence to succeed*



**Mike BABCOCK**

OCCASIONALLY, during those brief times at practice when he's taking a break, sophomore free safety Jerrell Pippens will ponder just how far he has come.

He doesn't measure it in miles, though he could. He is, after all, from Philadelphia — which is distant and not exactly fertile recruiting ground for the Cornhusker football program.

Rather, he measures it in achievement, beating the odds, negotiating the figurative distance between where he is now and where he might have been with less commitment.

He could have given up before he even started, after failing to meet the required standardized test score to be eligible as a college freshman following high school graduation.

He spent the fall semester of 1998 at home, working to improve his score.

Being at home "was kind of depressing," said Pippens. "Not that I don't love home. But everywhere you go, to the supermarket, to the store, to a social gathering, people are like, 'Hey, aren't you supposed to be in school?' It was kind of hard dealing with that."

His friends knew he had accepted a scholarship offer from the Nebraska track and field program. He had been among the best prep hurdlers in the country as a senior at West Catholic High School. But without the test score, there would be no scholarship, no competing for the Cornhuskers.

Billy Maxwell, a Nebraska assistant, kept in touch during that troubling time, eliminating any doubt about his choice of schools. "Who knows, if I hadn't had those struggles, I would probably be somewhere else, back east," Pippens said. "But Billy stuck with me through thick and thin."

Maxwell also made good on a recruiting promise that Pippens would be allowed to try out for the football team. Maxwell and head track and field coach Gary Pepin told Pippens that as long as he was good enough to become more than just a practice player, they had no problem with it.

With that in mind, Pippens brought along a football highlight videotape, which he gave to Nebraska secondary coach George Darlington, on his recruiting visit.

Pippens was a good high school football player, but he didn't attract a lot of recruiting attention from major college programs. For one thing, a shoulder injury sidelined him for most of his junior season in high school. And for another, the team wasn't particularly successful when he was a senior.

Even so, he takes pride in his high school. He wore a "West Catholic" T-shirt under his pads every day at practice during his redshirt season "to remind me where I come

from," he said.

When he goes home, former teammates "tell me how proud they are," he said. "I represent them, my family and my friends back home. Even though we weren't the best team, I love them to death."

Someone less determined might have given up football to concentrate on running track, which was the reason Nebraska had taken an interest in him in the first place. The football team had "about 10 free safeties," said Pippens. "And I'm like, 'Man, how's this going to work out?'"

But he persevered, with the encouragement of former Cornhuskers Ralph Brown and Mike Brown and the continuing support of senior Dion Booker, who regularly helps him with check calls.

"The older guys have definitely helped me," Pippens said.

His development on the track hasn't kept pace with his development on the football field. He's at a point now where football is his first priority — football and his schoolwork.

"I kind of figured out one sport would probably suffer because of the other," he said. "I had to realize that I'm going to have to live with the fact that I may not have reached my potential in track and field. But I'm out here now and I'm doing real good, so maybe it's going to be worth it."

"Sometimes when you love something, you have to give something up. Whatever happens is going to happen, as long as I can be the best football player and the best student I can be."

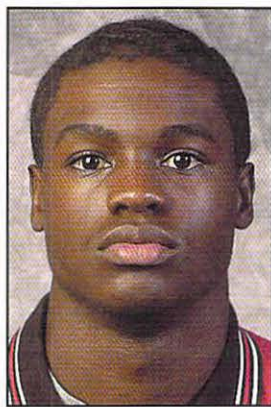
His experiences on the track, particularly running the 400-meter hurdles, have served him well. They've allowed him to travel across the country, to see places he wouldn't have seen otherwise, and, of course, they helped him get to Nebraska. They also gave him the persistence to succeed.

Few track events are more demanding than the 400-meter hurdles. To run them requires the same grit and determination as football. "You line up and it's third-and-goal, fourth-and-goal, and you know you're about to have a big collision," said Pippens. "You know it's going to hurt. But you want to do something for your team. You want to do something so you can win, leave it on the field mentally."

"When the gun goes off in the 400 hurdles, it's kind of like that. You know it's going to hurt. You know it's going to be tough. But you don't want to lose. So you have to have that mentality."

He has come a long way, literally and figuratively, because of that mentality.

"We weren't rich growing up. We weren't poor," Pippens said. "But for me a lot of things were harder than for other kids. Everything for me has been harder. But God has blessed me. He has taught me to take it one day at a time. He's brought me so far. I think about that every day." ■



**Jerrell Pippens is in his second year as a backup free safety.**





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# Many Happy Returns

**Huskers' kickoff return unit showing dramatic improvement**



**Terry DOUGLASS**

IN THE SPAN OF ONLY HALF A SEASON, one of the weakest aspects of Nebraska's football program has made a most dramatic transformation.

Through its first seven games, the kickoff return unit ranked second in the Big 12 Conference and ninth nationally with an average of 26.8 yards on 12 returns. That's a stark contrast from last season when Nebraska was last in the conference and 105th in the country with a 16.7-yard average.

The fact that Nebraska has made such marked improvement is no accident.

"It's just something this year that we've taken a lot more pride in," kickoff return specialist Josh Davis said. "And I mean the whole team — the guys up front blocking and myself back there returning it. We just want to get things done out there."

In hopes of injecting some life into the return game, special teams coach Dan Young visited professional football camps in Tampa and Detroit, before deciding to go with a scheme used by the NFL's Lions. Coach Frank Solich said that he and Young decided to focus on implementing one basic return, with one variation, to help simplify the situation after trying three different schemes last year.

The new scheme required the Huskers to switch from two deep return men to just one. After trying out several players, it became apparent that Davis was the best man for the job.

"Josh has been able to cover the entire field on kickoffs, and then once he's gotten it, he's done a great job of taking it up the field and then making sure that the timing between him and the back wedge is good," Solich said.

Solich said there's more skill required on kickoff returns than just being fast. He said Davis is adept at setting up opponents to help his teammates achieve better blocking angles.

"He'll even veer off away from that wedge and then come back to it to make sure that he hits it right timing-wise," Solich said. "I think that's a technique that you can just coach and coach and with some guys, and you're just not going to get it done. With Josh, it's natural for him. He does that instinctively."

Freshman middle linebacker Barrett Ruud is one of the players who has helped the kickoff returns improve this season. As blocker, Ruud said it's important to have a return man who can set up his blocks.

"You can't go straight at the wedge because people will just run right to you," Ruud said. "Josh is great at knowing when to make his cuts."

Davis said that so far it hasn't been difficult fielding the ball while being the only deep return man, even though it means he has to cover a lot of ground.

"We've just been watching a lot of film and certain teams have tendencies to kick certain directions, so we kind of

favor those sides," Davis said. "If they happen to kick the other direction, we'll adjust to it the next kickoff, but as far as it's been going, it's been pretty easy. I feel like I can handle it."

Davis' enthusiasm for his new special team position has also been key to the improvement. He handled 10 of Nebraska's first 12 kickoff returns this season and was averaging 29.5 yards per return, which ranked eighth nationally. His longest return of the season through seven games was 43 yards.

"It seem like last year, we weren't really producing as much as we felt the team could produce," Davis said. "This year, I think it's just been a big turnaround. I think the coaches are pleased with that and the players are pleased, too."

While Davis has been getting plenty of praise for the kickoff return team's improvement, he said the combination of his blockers and the new scheme should get the credit. The players in charge of opening a path for Davis include Ruud, Mark Vedral, Aaron Terpening, Philip Bland, Kyle Ringenberg, Phil Peetz, Steve Kriewald, Troy Hasselbroek, DeAntae Grixby and Tim Demerath.

"We had some great returners last year in Joe Walker, Bobby Newcombe and Randy Stella, but I'd say the scheme has a lot to do with it," Davis said. "But the main thing is those guys up front blocking. We're really putting a lot of emphasis on it this year, and everybody is out there trying to get things done and reach the goal that we've set every single week."

"They've been doing a really good job up front, and I've just been running through the holes that they create. It's just that easy for me."

In line with placing more emphasis on special teams, Solich said the coaching staff has positioned more front-line players on the kickoff return unit.

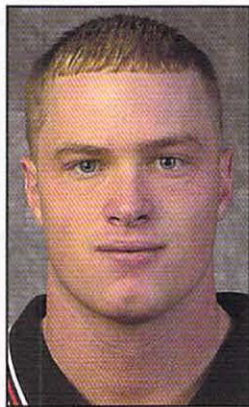
"I think it's all adding up, and it's all showing," Solich said.

Ruud agreed. Although he wasn't with the team last year, he said it was very apparent from the start of fall camp that the coaching staff was taking the kickoff return game very seriously.

"I think we are taking a little more pride in it," Ruud said. "The coaches have brought it up that we didn't do very well last year. I think the key is that we work pretty hard in practice on it. Coach Young has it scouted out pretty well, and then Josh Davis is hitting the holes real hard."

Although things have gone well so far, Davis said that neither he nor the rest of his teammates on the kickoff return team is satisfied.

"We want to get some touchdowns back there," Davis said. "We're still working hard to try to get those goals accomplished." ■



**Josh Davis averaged 29.5 yards on his first 10 kickoff returns.**



# Goals

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# Another Classic

*Big-play defense makes Sooners almost as dangerous without the football as when they have it*



**Curt McKEEVER**

TONIU FONOTI DEALT with Nebraska's 31-14 loss to Oklahoma last year by smashing his fist on a door leading to the visitors' locker room in OU's Memorial Stadium.

The force of Fonoti's frustration left the talented offensive guard with a broken right hand.

"I wasn't really the happiest guy coming off," Fonoti somewhat embarrassingly admits now.

No wonder he can't wait for the much-anticipated rematch this Saturday — when all his fury will be limited to Tom Osborne Field. He promises.

Thirty years removed from the Game of the Century, the third-ranked Cornhuskers and second-ranked Sooners appear ready to produce another in a long line of classics.

Is it any surprise?

After holding on to beat Kansas State 38-37, defending national champion Oklahoma showed its not going to be easy to unseat, dominating an explosive Texas team 14-3 the following week. The game marked the first time since 1997 that the Longhorns were held without a touchdown.

"To keep Texas out of the end zone all day was just something to watch," OU Coach Bob Stoops said afterward.

And almost necessary, because while OU has a ton of talent at the receiver positions, the Sooners have nowhere near the potency on offense they had with quarterback Josh Heupel.

Last year's Heisman Trophy runner-up might not have looked impressive in uniform, but he had a knack for getting the Sooners into huge plays.

As Stoops said after last year's game against Nebraska, "He is the system."

Now, OU has Jason White, who played well enough against Texas and Kansas to replace Nate Hybl as the starter against Baylor last week.

It was still the first start of White's career.

And if he struggles, then it's up to jitterbug running back Quentin Griffin, a preseason All-Big 12 selection, to dent the Nebraska defense. But against Kansas State, the Sooners netted just 9 yards rushing on 26 carries. And Texas limited OU to 63 yards on 31 carries.

Kicker Tim Duncan also has struggled on field goals — which places even more weight on Oklahoma's defense.

This is where the Sooners have lived up to their billing.

With All-American linebacker Rocky Calmus manning the middle, and a secondary that's as good as there is, this unit looks better than the one that fueled last year's Orange Bowl victory against Florida State.

The cornerbacks, Andre Woolfolk and Derrick Strait (remember his interception return for a TD last year?) are so good in man coverage that the defensive line can rear back and chase quarterbacks virtually every play. Throw in Roy Williams, a linebacker-sized strong safety who can lock up with wideouts or speed past line protection, and free safety

Brandon Everage, and the Sooners are almost as dangerous without the ball as they are when they have it.

"I was proud of our offensive line," Texas quarterback Chris Simms after the Oklahoma game, "but that's probably the best defense in the country."

Nebraska, of course, couldn't be in better hands trying to deal with that than fourth-year starter Eric Crouch. But the Heisman candidate will need to loosen OU's defense by making tight end Tracey Wistrom a bigger presence than he was against Oklahoma last year (he had just two catches) and keep looking for split end Wilson Thomas, who has emerged as a major playmaker.

If Oklahoma shuts down the Huskers' ground game, then like the Sooners, this game also looks to be in the defense's hands.

Nebraska would be comfortable in that situation.

"I feel good about our players now," defensive coordinator Craig Bohl said. "There's a lot of players who have a great deal of confidence. Any great defense that I've been around, the hallmark has been great leadership and great chemistry . . . I think we're maxing out on our potential."

A year ago, Oklahoma used a 24-point second quarter to overcome a 14-0 hole created when the Huskers totaled 167 yards on their first two drives. Nebraska didn't get that much the rest of the game.

"I've got as much respect for them as anyone you'll ever see, because of the complications of their schemes and the way they run them," Stoops said after the game. "To slow them down and stop them like that for three quarters is amazing. That's as good a defensive game as you'll ever see against Nebraska."

While Nebraska's defense pitched a shutout in the second half, the Sooners did more than enough in the second quarter. Heupel helped produce 192 yards in that period and had 238 yards passing at halftime.

"Right now, we're better-equipped (to handle the Sooners' attack), because I think we're more comfortable with our substitution package as far as matchups are concerned," NU secondary coach George Darlington said.

It helps that Nebraska has consistently stuffed the running game, but cornerbacks Keyuo Craver, DeJuan Groce and Erwin Swiney also have been impressive.

The bottom line for this one is that it's tough to give either team an edge. While Oklahoma has been tested against better competition (North Carolina, Kansas State and Texas), the Huskers have manhandled outmanned foes.

"Up to this point, they have responded in every game," Frank Solich said.

You gotta believe he has confidence that'll happen again this week. ■



**Linebacker Rocky Calmus leads the Oklahoma defense.**





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# 'Just Kee

## *Guard Fonoti says father taught him to be tough*

**By Mike Babcock**

**M**ilt Tenopir can tell when something is bothering Toniu Fonoti, when he's hurting. That's how it is between coach and player. There's an unspoken communication between them.

And in Fonoti's case, it often remains unspoken.

"Are you sore?" Tenopir asks.

And Fonoti replies, "There's nothing wrong, Coach."

"You're not going to tell me, are you?" Tenopir says.

And Fonoti says, "No, Coach, I'm not going to tell you."

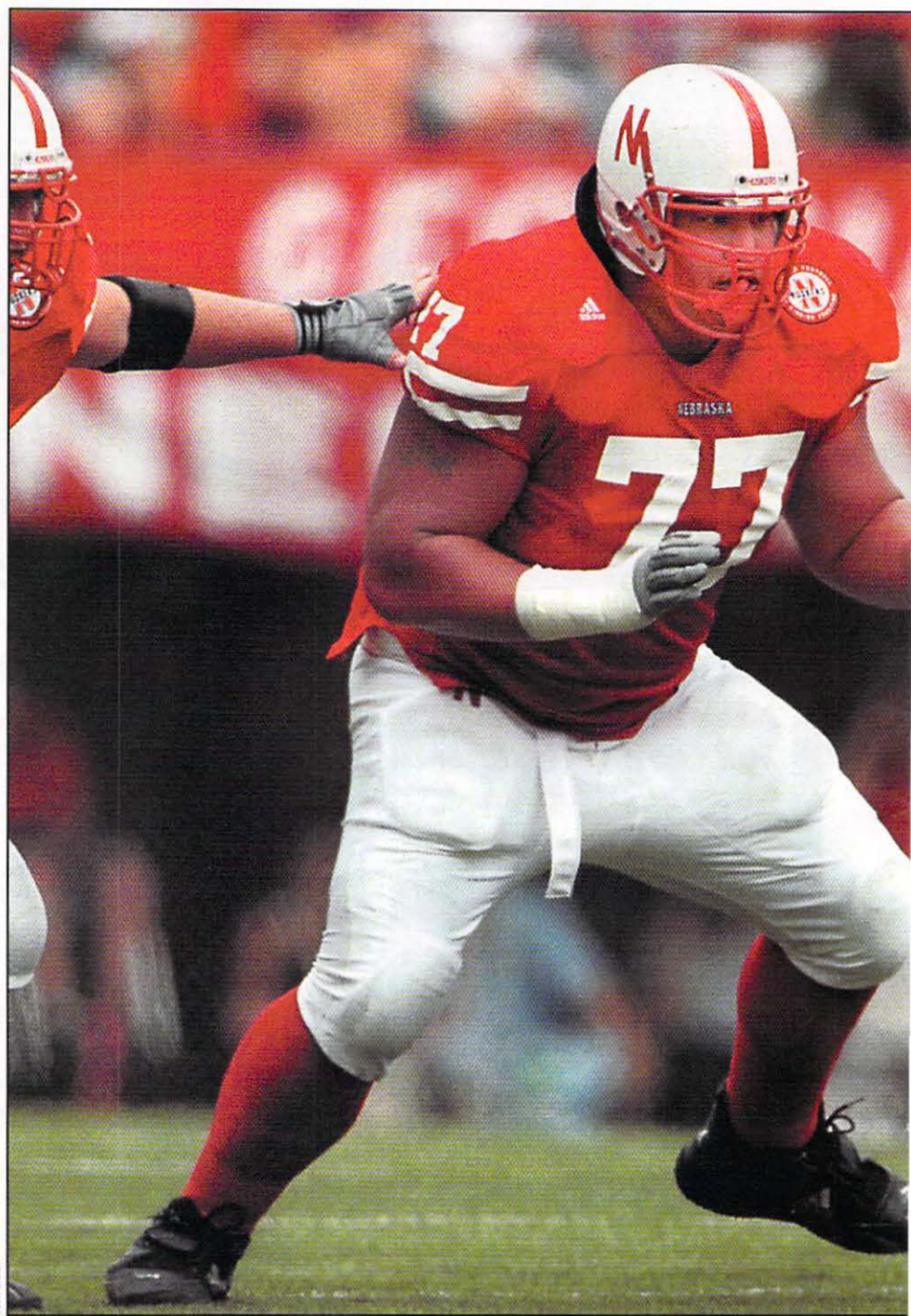
It always goes like that. Then two or three days later, Fonoti will tell the veteran offensive line coach what was bothering him. "He has a tremendously high threshold of pain," Tenopir said.

Perhaps the best example — as far as Tenopir knows, anyway — was Fonoti's freshman season. He played without redshirting, a rare accomplishment in itself, despite an ankle problem that could be traced to a break suffered during a basketball game when he was in high school.

The ankle regularly swelled up because it hadn't healed properly. But despite the pain, Fonoti played the entire season without complaint, and without even admitting that he was in pain.

"I figured I'd get something done at the end of the season," he said.

In the meantime, he told the trainers to tape the ankle as tightly as they could, to "put a lot more tape on it," he said. "I had to just kind of work



through the pain, no matter how bad it was."

At season's end, he finally acknowledged the pain, and the ankle was repaired surgically.

Fonoti brought his silence in such

matters with him to Nebraska. Even in high school he wouldn't admit to his coaches that he was bothered by injuries. "I kind of liked to tough it out, not have the coaches worrying about me being injured," he said. "I



# ep Going'



Junior guard Toniu Fonoti continues to pile up the pancakes after recording a school-record 155 knockdown blocks last season as a sophomore.

including his size and speed. He weighs 360 pounds, but he moves as if he weighed 260, said teammate Jon Rutherford, also an offensive guard. "That's amazing in itself. He's got great agility, and when he pulls, he's got control."

The program and media guide both list the 6-foot-4 Fonoti at 340 pounds. But Tenopir checks his weight chart every Monday and "he's between 360 and 365 every chart I get," Tenopir said.

"I think the coaches want me down a little bit," said Fonoti. "But I can't help it."

Occasionally, he and roommates Rutherford and Wes Cody have skipped the training table in favor of Chili's restaurant. But they're cutting back on the visits to Chili's, Fonoti said.

Despite his size, he can run. He carries his weight like no big man Tenopir has ever been around. "We're pulling him on everything we'd pull a normal-sized guy," Tenopir said. "He makes some great reads and some great cuts up in the holes, trying to find (line)backers."

That's evidence of his improvement, according to Tenopir. He has become a knowledgeable player, an instinctive player, a common sense player. When the defender he has been assigned to block has already been moved from the hole, he finds someone else, without hesitation.

He's relentless, "staying after you every snap," said Tenopir. "He poops out like anybody else. But there aren't many times when he's not running you down until the whistle blows."

He's also fundamentally sound, very adept at getting the proper angle to block people. "It's an upward lift every time you see him block," Tenopir said. "He's getting better and better."

That's reflected statistically. Fonoti broke the school record for pancake or knockdown blocks with 155 last

## The Fonoti File



### Toniu Fonoti

Junior offensive guard

6-4, 340

Hauula, Hawaii

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season, averaging 14.1 per game. And he's leading the team again.

But numbers are a poor measure of the way he overpowers opponents. Zero in on him for one series, just watch him specifically "and see the mashing that goes on," said Tenopir.

"You know where Toniu is," Cody said. "You can hear the cracking."

Ironically, perhaps, Fonoti's development has included bringing his temper into check. By his own admission, he's laid back off the field. But he's different in helmet and pads.

In high school, he would get mad and retaliate when opponents baited him. His parents told him such behavior was non-productive and encouraged him to channel his energy in a positive direction.

Even though he has taken their advice to heart, Coach Frank Solich had to remind him of their wisdom after he drew a 15-yard personal foul

think that's basically from my dad.

"He has always said be tough, just keep going. Don't give up, work past it."

His tolerance for pain is as impressive as everything else about him,



penalty in the Missouri game for retaliating.

Solich didn't yell when they met on the sideline. He was calm, Fonoti said.

"What would make you cause us a 15-yard penalty?" Solich asked.

"He pushed me, Coach," Fonoti replied.

Solich looked at him intently. "He pushed you?"

"It was just a push, and I didn't really like it," Fonoti said several days later, recalling the incident with a laugh that filled the interview room on the lower level of the South Stadium.

His parents told him "when someone starts talking, I (should) just go, 'OK, we'll wait 'til the next play. Then I'll talk with my pads.' Until Missouri, I was doing pretty good," he said.

After the brief conversation with Solich, he kept his temper in check.

When a Missouri defender pushed, "I just walked away — straight away," he said.

Early on, Tenopir interpreted Fonoti's quiet nature off the field as evidence of his being a "non-expressive type guy." But in retrospect, it was more a matter of his not knowing "what to think of us all. The thing I've seen is, he has become a more open



Toniu Fonoti (77) played in all 13 games as a true freshman in 1999 and is in his second year as a starter on the Husker offensive line.

conversationalist," said Tenopir.

"He voices his feelings and enters into more in-depth conversations than (when) he first came here. He has a great sense of humor, that I didn't realize until just a few months ago."

Fonoti still won't let on when he's hurting, though.

He suffered a hyper-extended elbow in the Iowa State game, Tenopir said, but he didn't admit it until the

third quarter, after it was apparent that the Cornhuskers had taken control.

He wouldn't have said anything if the score had been tied, Tenopir added.

Actually, he hyper-extended the elbow three weeks before the Iowa State game.

"I didn't say anything," said Fonoti. "I think now Coach is used to that." ■

# Flag Heaven

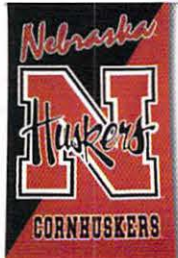
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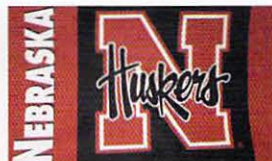
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# A Cool Number

**Earning a Blackshirt was a big surprise for Huskers' No. 1, McPherson**

**W**hen Lornell McPherson arrived at Nebraska, he requested a No. 7 jersey. Like many freshmen, he wanted the same number he wore in high school. But his request was rejected.

Sure, Eric Crouch already wore No. 7, but he was an offensive player. And since McPherson figured he was going to end up on defense, there wouldn't be a problem.

He was wrong. "I guess they didn't want to give me the same number," he said.

So he settled for his second choice, a No. 6 jersey. JaMaine Billups, his high school teammate and friend, wore No. 6 at Omaha Central, and he wears it now at Iowa State.

That way "we'd be the same number," said McPherson.

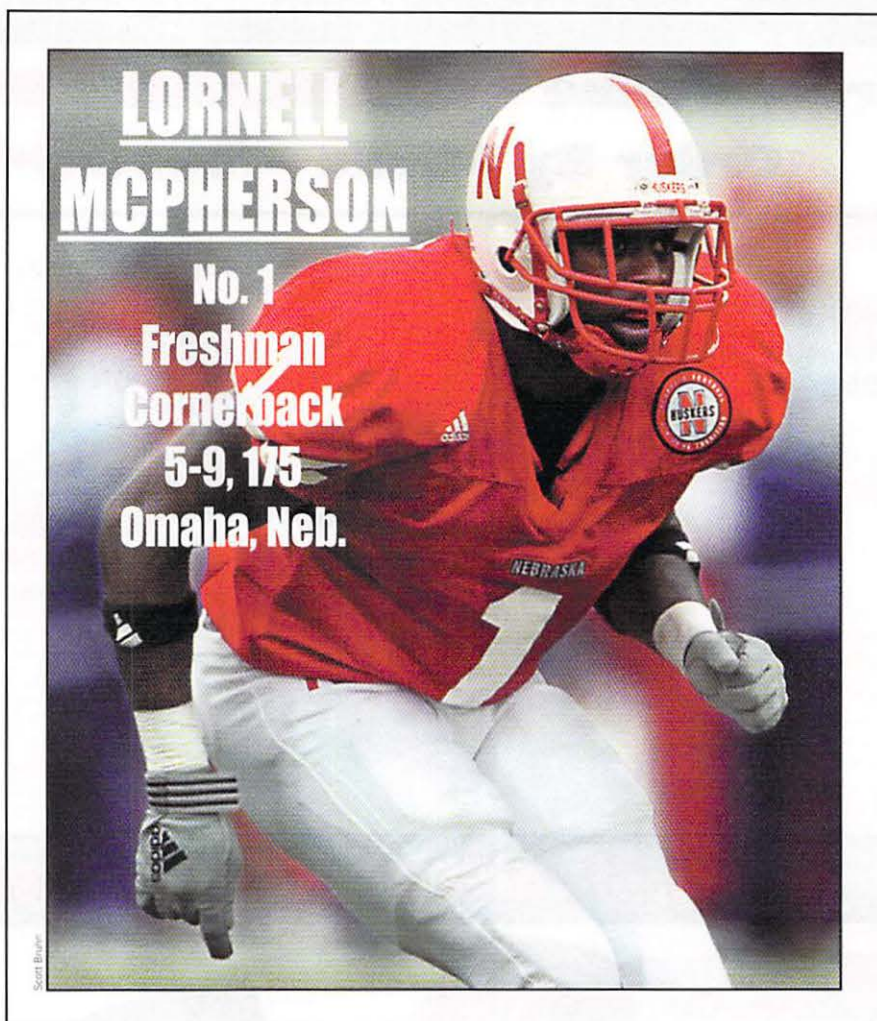
He wore No. 6 as a freshman redshirt last season. But when he shed the redshirt, he was told he would have to pick another jersey number because DeAntae Grixby wore No. 6.

Grixby is an I-back and McPherson is a cornerback, offense and defense, so that wasn't a problem. But they both were slated for duty on the punt return team, and that was.

Since Grixby had seniority, McPherson had to switch numbers, which is how he ended up wearing a No. 1 jersey. "I wanted a single digit," he said. "I really don't know why."

He was told he could have No. 1. And "I was like, 'One is a cool number,'" he said.

Not getting the jersey number he wanted is no big deal in the whole scheme of things, when you consider



that the practice jersey on which McPherson wears No. 1 is black.

Earning a Blackshirt "was like the last thing on my mind," he said. "It's kind of rare for a redshirted freshman. I was just thinking about playing, getting me a little bit of time."

"I thought I would get in behind Keyuo (Craver), get time in at the end of games."

Instead, he has gotten time at the beginning of games as the No. 1 nickel back.

"It happened real fast," said McPherson, who was "a little disappointed" last season when he was told he was going to redshirt. His disappointment was heightened by the fact that fellow freshman defensive backs Willie Amos and Terrell Butler

played. "I was like, 'I don't want to redshirt.'"

"But then going through the year, I thought it was good for me, instead of wasting a year. I was kind of glad that I redshirted. I learned a lot more and got better on my techniques."

And despite being a redshirt, he didn't have to play on the scout team.

He was given a gold practice jersey and allowed to work with the back-ups. "I was kind of happy about that," he said.

McPherson showed he was flexible in his outlook long before he came to Nebraska. He was a quarterback on offense until his senior year at Central High, when he switched to running back, joining Billups — whom he tried to convince to come to



Nebraska — to give the Eagles a high-powered rushing tandem. McPherson averaged 13 yards per carry, gaining 1,043 yards and scoring 15 touchdowns.

He and Billups both followed in Central's tradition of outstanding running backs.

"They call it 'I-back High,'" said McPherson. In addition to Grixby, former Cornhuskers Ahman Green, Calvin Jones, Leodis Flowers and Keith Jones were Central graduates. He wasn't inclined to follow in their tradition at Nebraska, however. "I thought I was kind of small to play running back," he said.

He is listed at 5-foot-9 and 175 pounds.

That's not to say he couldn't have played offense. He talked about trying wide receiver during his recruitment, and Coach Frank Solich told him he could give that position a try.

But during pre-season practice, he settled on defensive back, specifically cornerback — though he also briefly considered playing free safety. Cornerback was appealing "probably just because of the challenge of it, trying to see what the people could do on me, see if the receiver can do what he's supposed to do," McPherson said. "I want to cover somebody, make a big hit, something like that."

He has the speed to cover one-on-one. He ran on the state's all-time best 400-meter relay team at Central. And he has the temperament to play cornerback at the major college level.

The key is "staying focused and playing hard," he said. "I played hard at Central, but it's just a whole different feeling with 78,000 people watching you. You know you have to do good."

"It's just set in your mind that you've got to play at the best of your ability every play."

That quickly becomes apparent, considering every snap in practice is preserved on videotape.

"If you slack off on one play, you get that reality check right away," McPherson said. "Things get noticed by the coaches, so you have to be on the good side of everything. If you don't do something right, it's going to be noticed. And they point it out, right when we start watching film."

That was true even when he was a redshirt, wearing a No. 6 jersey. ■



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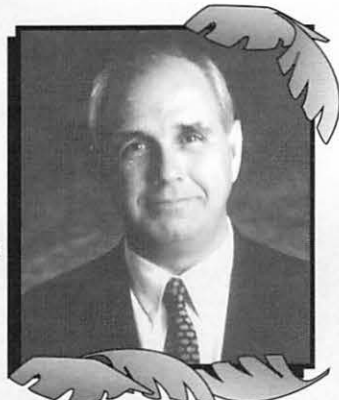
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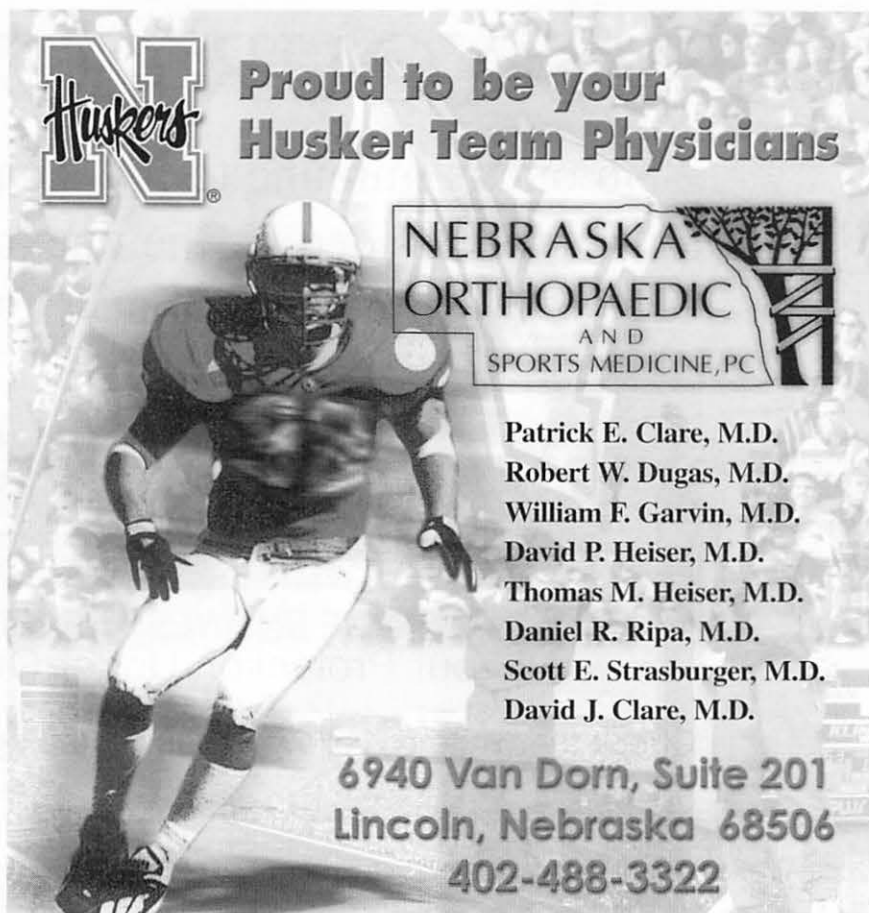


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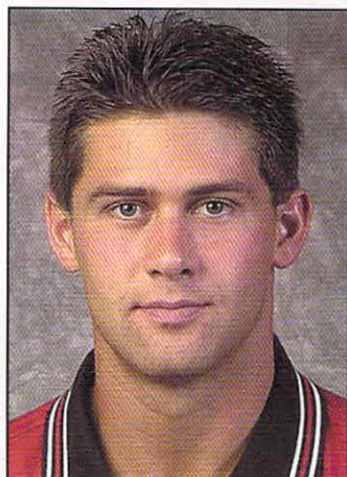
# Nebraska 41 Texas Tech 31



Nebraska defensive tackle Jeremy Slechta wraps up Texas Tech wide receiver Carlos Francis after a 1-yard gain in the third quarter. Francis was the game's leading receiver with 11 catches for 169 yards.



## Husker Player of the Game



Eric Crouch

### Crouch Says He Was 'OK'

Yes, Eric Crouch threw two interceptions among his 22 passes, including one on a first-and-10 at the Texas Tech 11-yard line less than 30 seconds into the fourth quarter.

"I probably should have thrown the ball away," he said. "I probably forced that one. It was an important play."

If not for the interception, Nebraska might have gotten the ball in the end zone and alleviated the tension a little. The Cornhuskers were clinging to a 38-31 lead at the time.

But Coach Frank Solich didn't criticize Crouch for making a bad decision. "I thought he did an excellent job of making the plays when they had to be made," said Solich.

Texas Tech Coach Mike Leach has claimed that his quarterback, Kliff Kingsbury, is the best in the conference but that a media conspiracy has prevented him from getting the attention he deserves.

And Kingsbury's statistics were impressive. But so were Crouch's. He completed 10-of-22 passes for 196 yards and three touchdowns, and he rushed for 105 yards and one touchdown.

"All in all, I thought he had a good game," Solich said.

As usual, Crouch judged himself more harshly.

"I think there were things I could have done better," he said. "But it was OK. Overall, the offense overcame adversity. If we won the game, I'm not going to be down about anything." ■

# More Th

## Wounded Huskers forced to dig deep to hold off Red Raiders

By Mike Babcock  
Photos by  
Scott Bruhn

**N**ebraska was using back-ups at the end of the Texas Tech game.

On offense, for example, Scott Koethe was at left tackle. Wes Cody was at right guard. Paul Kastl was the fullback. And Aaron Golliday and Jon Bowling were alternating at tight end.

Coach Frank Solich regularly clears the bench, rewarding reserves for their hard work in practice when the Cornhuskers have games in-hand, particularly at Memorial Stadium.

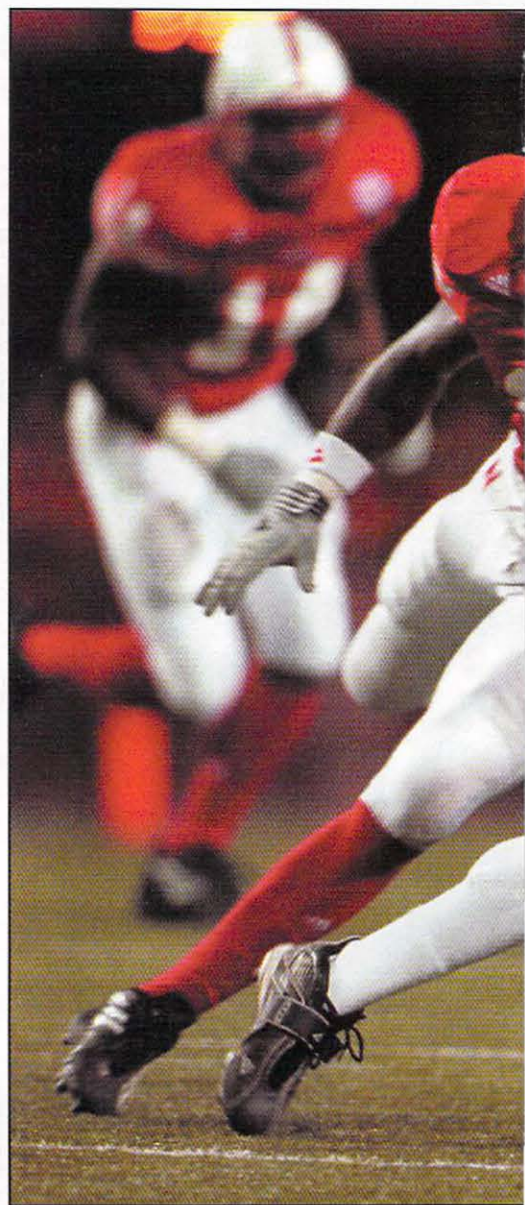
But this time Nebraska didn't have the game in-hand, not until Josh Brown's 36-yard field goal with 3:25 remaining. Solich wasn't rewarding hard work; he was trying to win the game.

And Koethe, Cody, Kastl, Golliday and Bowling were among several back-ups who had to step up in a big way for the No. 3-ranked Cornhuskers to escape a scare from Texas Tech, 41-31.

"I'm real proud of our players, how they responded," Solich said.

The back-ups had to respond, as starters left the field with injuries.

Koethe replaced Dave Volk, who was sidelined by what was initially diagnosed as a dislocated shoulder. Cody replaced Jon Rutherford, who was moved to right tackle to replace



Dan Vili Waldrop, who was sidelined by an ankle sprain. And Kastl replaced Judd Davies, who was sidelined by an ankle sprain. Steve Kriewald, the No. 2 fullback, didn't suit up also because of an ankle sprain.

Bowling and Golliday saw more action because Tracey Wistrom had a sore knee.

Wistrom's knee was injured during practice on Wednesday, when he collided with a scout team player. The decision to hold him out wasn't made



# an a Tuneup



Nebraska's secondary spent a lot of time chasing Texas Tech receivers, as the Red Raiders attempted 64 passes. Here, NU's Erwin Swiney tries to make the tackle on Tech's Carlos Francis. Swiney had 6 tackles and 3 breakups.

The Cornhuskers didn't see it that way, however, according to cornerback DeJuan Groce. They weren't looking ahead. "We were pretty much focused on Texas Tech," he said.

"If we had looked past them, we might get beat."

At halftime, such a possibility didn't require a stretch of the imagination. Texas Tech drove 80 yards on five plays in 46 seconds to tie the score at 28. Ricky Williams scored on a 12-yard run with 3 seconds remaining in the half, then Kliff Kingsbury passed for the two-point conversion.

The last time the Cornhuskers allowed as many as 28 points during the first half was in 1988, when UCLA scored 38 on the way to a 41-28 victory at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

Kingsbury was the key to Texas Tech's challenge. The 6-foot-4, 208-pound junior from New Braunfels, Texas, threw 63 passes, completing 33 for 353 yards and one touchdown.

Nebraska intercepted one pass, but sacked him only three times.

"We said last week we were going to find out how good of a defense we were," said Cornhusker defensive coordinator Craig Bohl. "I think some things were revealed tonight."

One of those things was team character. "It's like a gut-check," Groce said. "In the second half, we came together as a family. The second half, everybody was into it."

Texas Tech scored only three points after the intermission.

The Red Raiders never really slowed down Nebraska's offense, even with the substitutions necessitated by the injuries. The Cornhuskers amassed 531 yards, including 335 rushing.

Diedrick ran for 157 yards, his third consecutive game over 100. And quarterback Eric Crouch rushed for 105 yards and one touchdown. But

until pre-game warm-ups.

"He still wanted to start, still wanted to try it," said Solich.

In addition, wingback John Gibson and cornerback Keyuo Craver went to the sideline with ankle sprains and didn't return. "It was shocking," I-back Dahrran Diedrick said. "Every time you looked up, somebody was coming out with an injury. A lot of guys went down."

"That's something we've been able to stay away from so far this year."

It was definitely a curious night for

Nebraska, which figured to make short work of a Texas Tech team that two weeks earlier had lost to Kansas, at Lubbock, 34-31 in overtime. True, the Red Raiders had beaten Kansas State the previous week, 38-19. But the Wildcats have been faltering.

So the Texas Tech game looked to be little more than a tuneup for Oklahoma, which comes to Memorial Stadium next. That's how most in a crowd of 77,838 saw it, anyway.

Whip up on the Red Raiders and then bring on Oklahoma.





Nebraska's defense shut out Texas Tech in the fourth quarter. One of the key plays was DeJuan Groce's breakup of a third down pass intended for Anton Paige (above). The Huskers held on fourth down at their own 34 and then drove 47 yards in six plays to set up Josh Brown's clinching 36-yard field goal (right) with 3:25 remaining. Brown (26) celebrates with holder Joe Chrisman (11).



Crouch's passing also was crucial to Nebraska's eighth victory. He completed 10-of-22 for 196 yards and three touchdowns, two of them to Wilson Thomas.

Bowling caught the other, a 27-yarder to offset an 85-yard punt return for a touchdown by Texas Tech's Wes Welker, less than 3 minutes into the game.

Welker returned a punt 80 yards for what appeared to be another touchdown late in the second quarter,

but the play was nullified by an off-sides penalty.

In any case, Nebraska passed, primarily in the first half — Crouch threw only five passes in the second half — because "it was obvious they would have a difficult time playing play-action passes with the way they were committing to the run, and where they were lining their secondary," said Solich.

"So we decided to go ahead and try and loosen them up."

Apparently, the strategy worked. The Cornhuskers opened the second half with a nine-play, 70-yard touchdown drive, capped by Crouch's 7-yard run, to take the lead that the defense protected.

Brown kicked a 33-yard field goal on Nebraska's next possession for some breathing room, which quickly faded. Texas Tech responded with a field goal of its own to set the stage for some fourth-quarter drama. But "we knew we were going to get out of it,"





Groce said.

"If they beat us, that's the end of our season."

Regardless of the team's concerns about Texas Tech's potential, most Cornhusker fans expected a blowout by the fourth quarter, when Solich would reward the reserves with playing time.

But Nebraska used only 58 players in the game.

"A lot of guys stepped to the plate," said Solich. ■

# 4TH & 1 INCHES

*Notes And Quotes From The Texas Tech Game*

## HEALTH CONCERNS

Whether or not the injuries suffered against Texas Tech would keep players out of the Oklahoma game wouldn't be known immediately, Coach Frank Solich said.

Judd Davies, Keyuo Craver, John Gibson and Dan Vili Waldrop left the game with ankle injuries. Dave Volk suffered a possible dislocated right shoulder; he was on the sideline in the second half, wearing a sling. Tracey Wistrom and Steve Kriewald both were held out, Wistrom because of a sore knee and Kriewald because of an ankle injury that hampered him throughout the week.

## CROUCH COMMENDATION

Texas Tech linebacker Jonathan Hawkins was gracious in defeat, calling the Cornhuskers' Eric Crouch "probably one of the best athletes playing quarterback I have ever seen. He's quick and strong and one of the best option quarterbacks I have ever played against," said Hawkins.

"His passing game has really improved from last season."

Crouch passes for 196 yards and three touchdowns.

"Tonight they came out throwing and caught us off guard," Hawkins said.

## WELL PREPARED

Texas Tech learned from last season's 56-3 loss to Nebraska at Lubbock, according to Cornhusker defensive tackle Jeremy Slechta. "I think they kind of knew what was coming after last year," he said. "It kind of seems like, at times, they knew what we were running up front."

"They knew what was coming. They'd call it out. They knew what we were running before the play even started. They studied film well, and it showed, too."

Red Raiders quarterback Kliff Kingsbury completed 33-of-63 passes for 353 yards and one touchdown, with one interception. "They really threw the ball well on us," said Slechta. "That stuff is going to have to change. We can't keep getting by and sliding by."

"We're going to have to come out and work on that this week in practice."

Slechta had one of Nebraska's three sacks, hauling down Kingsbury for a 7-yard loss on fourth-and-8 from the Cornhusker 32-yard line on the Red Raiders' final play from scrimmage.

Rush ends Chris Kelsay and J.P. Wichmann also had sacks.

"It was obvious he was going to complete some throws and make plays," said Nebraska Coach Frank Solich. "We wanted to make sure they were not getting big plays."

## TRADING TURNOVERS

The Cornhuskers did a much better job of taking care of the ball against Texas Tech than they did the previous week against Baylor. After losing five-of-seven fumbles against the Bears, they didn't fumble at all against Texas Tech. Quarterback Eric Crouch threw two interceptions, but they were balanced by a Dion Booker interception of Kingsbury and a fumble recovery by Tim Demerath.

Demerath, a senior walk-on from Plainview, Neb., recovered the fumble on the kickoff following Nebraska's first touchdown — on a pass from Crouch to tight end Jon Bowling — to set up the Cornhuskers' second touchdown. They took possession at the Texas Tech 25-yard line and on the first play, fullback Judd Davies scored. Only 15 seconds separated the Cornhuskers' first two touchdowns.

## NEAR-RECORD RETURN

Texas Tech's Wes Welker returned Kyle Larson's first punt 85 yards for a touchdown, to give the Red Raiders a 7-0 lead. Welker's return was the second-longest ever against Nebraska. Baylor's Del Shofner returned a punt 91 yards for a touchdown against the Cornhuskers in 1956.

The punt return touchdown was only the seventh against Nebraska all-time.

Welker would have had an 80-yard punt return for a touchdown in the second quarter if not for a Tech offside penalty. "Without question, that's a concern," Solich said.

"It was a combination of factors there, just watching from the sideline."

The last punt-return touchdown allowed by Nebraska was Joey Getherall's 83-yarder in the Notre Dame game a year ago. It was the first return of 25 yards or more against the Cornhuskers this season.

## BUSY BACKS

Unofficially, defensive backs Lornell McPherson and Dion Booker were the Cornhuskers' leading tacklers. McPherson was credited with eight tackles, including seven unassisted. Booker was credited with seven tackles. Erwin Swiney had five tackles and three pass breakups. ■



# 2001 Schedule

(Team's current record)

1	Aug. 25	TCU (4-3), W 21-7	1-0
2	Sept. 1	Troy State (3-3), W 42-14	2-0
3	Sept. 8	Notre Dame (3-3), W 27-10	3-0
4	Sept. 20	Rice (6-1), W 48-3	4-0
5	Sept. 29	@ Missouri (3-3), W 36-3	5-0
6	Oct. 6	Iowa State (5-1), W 48-14	6-0
7	Oct. 13	@ Baylor (2-4), W 48-7	7-0
8	Oct. 20	Texas Tech (3-3), W 41-31	8-0
9	Oct. 27	Oklahoma (7-0), 11 a.m., ABC	
10	Nov. 3	@ Kansas (2-4), TBA	
11	Nov. 10	Kansas State (2-4), TBA	
12	Nov. 23	@ Colorado (5-2), 2:30 p.m., ABC	

**Dec. 1**      **Big 12 Championship**  
**at Irving, Texas, 7 p.m., ABC**

## Big 12 at a Glance

	North		All	
	Conf.			
Nebraska	4	0	8	0
Iowa State	3	1	5	1
Colorado	3	1	5	2
Missouri	2	2	3	3
Kansas	1	3	2	4
Kansas State	0	4	2	4
	South		All	
	Conf.			
Oklahoma	4	0	7	0
Texas	3	1	6	1
Texas A&M	3	1	6	1
Texas Tech	1	3	3	3
Baylor	0	4	2	4
Oklahoma State	0	4	2	5

### Oct. 20 results

Nebraska 41, Texas Tech 31  
 Oklahoma 33, Baylor 17  
 Texas 41, Colorado 7  
 Texas A&M 31, Kansas State 24  
 Missouri 38, Kansas 34  
 Iowa State 28, Oklahoma State 14

### Nonconference opponents

Notre Dame 27, USC 16  
 TCU 38, Army 13  
 Rice 33, Nevada 30, ot  
 Troy State 44, Cal State-Northridge 31

## Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

Aug. 25	<b>Oklahoma (7-0)</b>
Sept. 1	North Carolina, W 41-27
Sept. 8	at Air Force, W 44-3
Sept. 29	North Texas, W 37-10
Sept. 29	Kansas State, W 38-37
Oct. 6	vs. Texas (Dallas), W 14-3
Oct. 13	at Kansas, W 38-10
Oct. 20	Baylor, W 33-17
Oct. 27	at Nebraska
Nov. 3	Tulsa
Nov. 10	Texas A&M
Nov. 17	at Texas Tech
Nov. 24	Oklahoma State
Sept. 1	<b>Kansas (2-4)</b>
Sept. 8	Southwest Mo. St., W 24-10
Sept. 22	UCLA, L 41-17
Oct. 6	at Colorado, L 27-16
Oct. 13	at Texas Tech, W 34-31, 2 ot
Oct. 20	Oklahoma, L 38-10
Oct. 27	Missouri, L 38-34
Oct. 27	at Kansas State
Nov. 3	Nebraska
Nov. 10	at Texas
Nov. 17	Iowa State
Nov. 24	Wyoming

## Game 9

**Oklahoma**  
**Oct. 27**

**Location:** Norman, Okla.

**Enrollment:** 26,844

**2001 record:** 7-0

**Coach:** Bob Stoops, 3rd

year

**Series:** Oklahoma leads 40-36-3



**11 a.m. (ABC)**

**Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.**

## Sooner to Watch

**Senior**      **linebacker**      **Rocky**  
**Calmus** is the leader of the Sooner



defense. The 6-3, 234-pound Tulsa, Okla., product was a consensus All-American as a junior and is leading the Sooners in tackles again with 69. He also has 9 tackles for

losses, 2 sacks, 2 fumble recoveries, 1 interception and has blocked one kick. Calmus had 125 tackles last season, including 17 in OU's 31-14 win over Nebraska. He was one of three finalists for the 2000 Butkus Award and is on the watch list this season.

## Quick Facts

**After coming off the bench** to relieve junior starter Nate Hybl for two straight weeks, sophomore Jason White made the most of his first start, throwing for 343 yards and a touchdown in the Sooners' 33-17 victory over Baylor.

**Quentin Griffin** is OU's leading rusher at 64.4 yards per game. The Sooners have averaged 129.1 yards per game on the ground and 237.1 through the air.

**Oklahoma owns** the nation's longest current winning streak at 20 games, the best by the Sooners since a string of 20 between 1986 and 1987. OU's only longer streaks were 47, 31 and 28 games.

## On Deck

**At Kansas**  
**Nov. 3**

**Location:** Lawrence, Kan.

**Enrollment:** 27,407

**2001 record:** 2-4

**Coach:** Terry Allen, 5th

year

**Series:** Nebraska leads 82-21-3



**Time TBA**

**Memorial Stadium, Lawrence, Kan.**



## Tentative 2 Deeps

### NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	9	Wilson Thomas**	6-6	215	Jr.
81		Ben Cornelsen*	5-10	190	Jr.
LT	58	Dave Volk***	6-5	300	Sr.
73		Scott Koethe*	6-5	310	Jr.
LG	77	Toni Fonoti**	6-4	340	Jr.
74		Steve Alstadt*	6-5	295	Sr.
C	52	John Garrison**	6-4	285	Jr.
53		Matt Shook*	6-2	300	Jr.
RG	66	Jon Rutherford***	6-3	300	Sr.
59		Wes Cody*	6-2	295	Jr.
RT	68	Dan Waldrop*	6-5	330	So.
66		Jon Rutherford***	6-3	300	Sr.
TE	87	Tracey Wistrom***	6-5	240	Sr.
99		Aaron Golliday**	6-4	285	Jr.
QB	7	Eric Crouch***	6-1	200	Sr.
10		Jammal Lord*	6-2	215	So.
FB	4	Judd Davies*	6-0	240	So.
45		Steve Kriewald	5-10	255	Fr.
IB	30	Dahran Diedrick**	6-0	225	Jr.
1		Thunder Collins*	6-2	190	Jr.
WB	8	John Gibson***	6-0	195	Sr.
89		Troy Hassebrook**	6-4	220	Jr.
PK	26	Josh Brown**	6-2	190	Jr.

### NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR	57	Chris Kelsay**	6-5	270	Jr.
92		Justin Smith*	6-4	260	Jr.
NT	55	Jon Clanton**	6-2	280	Jr.
59		Ryon Bingham	6-3	275	So.
DT	56	Jeremy Slechtsa**	6-6	285	Sr.
85		Casey Nelson**	6-2	285	Sr.
RR	98	Demoine Adams**	6-2	235	Jr.
95		J.P. Wichmann**	6-4	230	Sr.
SLB	43	Scott Shanley**	6-2	235	Jr.
47		Ira Cooper	6-2	220	Fr.
MLB	48	Jamie Burrow***	6-1	245	Sr.
38		Barrett Ruud	6-2	220	Fr.
WLB	9	Mark Vedral***	6-1	210	Sr.
17		T.J. Hollowell*	6-0	220	So.
LCB	3	Keyuo Craver***	5-10	190	Sr.
28		Pat Ricketts*	5-11	180	So.
FS	27	Willie Amos*	6-0	185	So.
or	14	Dion Booker***	6-1	205	Sr.
ROV	21	Philip Bland	6-0	205	Fr.
2		Aaron Terpening**	5-11	200	Jr.
RCB	5	DeJuan Groce**	5-10	190	Jr.
or	16	Erwin Swiney***	6-0	185	Sr.
P	19	Kyle Larson	6-0	205	So.

### OKLAHOMA OFFENSE

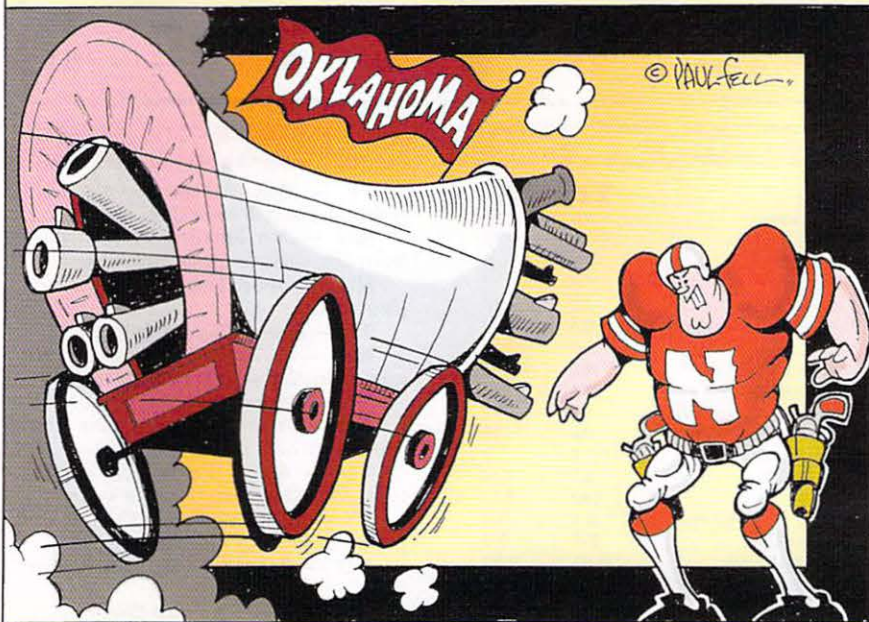
WR	12	Curtis Fagan**	6-0	176	Jr.
6		Antwone Savage**	6-1	190	Jr.
LT	63	Frank Romero***	6-4	286	Sr.
66		Jarrod Barclay*	6-3	280	So.
LG	60	Wes Sims	6-5	310	Fr.
78		Cliff Takawana	6-3	300	Fr.
C	77	Josh Smith*	6-1	281	Jr.
50		Vince Carter	6-3	265	Fr.
RG	75	Mike Skinner**	6-4	298	Jr.
65		Will Mathis*	6-5	303	Sr.
RT	68	Howard Duncan*	6-3	299	Sr.
66		Jarrod Barclay*	6-3	280	So.
TE	88	Trent Smith**	6-5	229	Jr.
86		Lance Donley*	6-4	225	So.
WR	17	Andre Woolfolk**	6-1	175	Jr.
9		Mark Clayton	5-11	170	Fr.
QB	18	Jason White*	6-2	220	So.
8		Nate Hybl*	6-3	217	Jr.
H	42	Jeremy Hess*	6-3	217	Jr.
49		Chris Toney	6-1	230	So.
F	22	Quentin Griffin**	5-6	187	Jr.
47		Rinaldo Works*	6-1	208	So.
K	40	Tim Duncan**	6-2	198	Sr.

### OKLAHOMA DEFENSE

LE	89	Cory Heinecke**	6-1	218	Sr.
49		Jonathan Jackson	6-4	220	Fr.
LT	93	Kory Klein*	6-2	270	So.
9		Bary Holleyman***	6-4	284	Sr.
RT	74	Juan Prishker	6-2	272	Jr.
97		Tommie Harris	6-3	275	Fr.
RE	80	Dan Cody*	6-4	262	So.
87		Marcus Chretien*	6-3	241	Sr.
SLB	45	Jimmy Whetson*	6-4	230	So.
46		Brandon Moore***	6-1	232	Sr.
MLB	11	Teddy Lehman*	6-1	232	So.
46		Brandon Moore***	6-1	232	Sr.
WLB	20	Rocky Calmus**	6-3	234	Sr.
46		Brandon Moore***	6-1	232	Sr.
CB	28	Antonio Perkins	6-0	178	Fr.
17		Andre Woolfolk**	6-1	175	Jr.
SS	38	Roy Williams**	6-0	221	Jr.
34		Matt McCoy*	5-11	195	So.
FS	7	Brandon Everage*	5-11	192	So.
1		Terrance Simms	6-1	185	Jr.
CB	2	Derrick Strait*	5-11	194	So.
4		Jarvis Smith	5-9	170	So.
P	83	Jeff Ferguson***	5-10	190	Sr.

## THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

# NEBRASKA vs. OKLAHOMA



OCT. 27, 2001

SOONER SCHOONER COULD RUN OVER HUSKERS IF THEY AREN'T READY TO GIVE THIS ONE THEIR BEST SHOT OF THE SEASON!

# PICKS

## OKLAHOMA AT NEBRASKA

### Brian Hill Editor

Oklahoma's Jason White passed for 343 yards in his first start, but that was at home, against Baylor, and he's only a sophomore. Things will be different in Lincoln, where a certain senior quarterback resides. With Eric Crouch at the controls and enough depth to overcome its injury problems, you have to like Nebraska's chances.

**Nebraska 20, Oklahoma 13**

### Mike Babcock

#### Contributing Editor

The bad thing is, the winner of this game will probably have to play the loser again in the Big 12 championship game at Irving,

Texas on Dec. 1. So the question is, can Nebraska beat the defending national champion twice? The defenses should dominate, with the Cornhuskers gaining an edge at home. **Nebraska 16, Oklahoma 14**

### Terry Douglass Grand Island Independent Sports Editor

Nebraska looked shaky defensively at times in its tuneup against Texas Tech, but a dose of humility may have been just what the Blackshirts needed. Crouch and Co. have the Cornhusker offense rolling, and history has shown that inexperienced quarterbacks don't fare well in Lincoln. **Nebraska 27, Oklahoma 17**



# BY THE NUMBERS

## Nebraska vs. Texas Tech

Oct. 20, 2001 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

### Score By Quarters

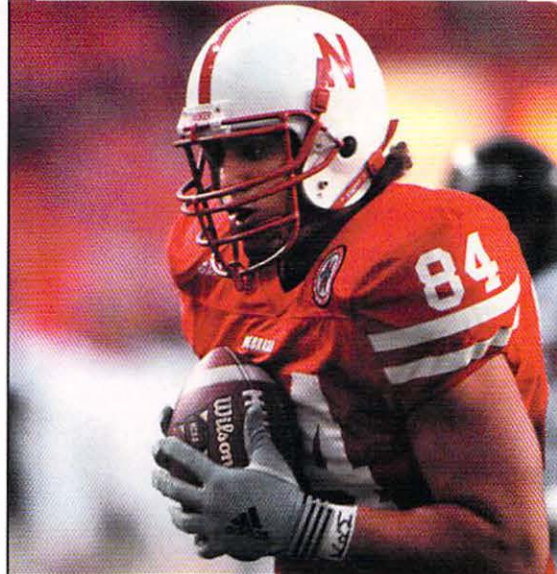
<b>Texas Tech</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>41</b>

### Team Stats

	<b>TT</b>	<b>NU</b>
First Downs	26	30
Rushing	8	19
Passing	15	9
Penalty	3	2
Rushing Attempts	17	56
Yards Gained Rushing	93	348
Yards Lost Rushing	26	13
Net Yards Rushing	67	335
Net Yards Passing	373	196
Passes Attempted	64	22
Passes Completed	34	10
Had Intercepted	1	2
Total Plays	81	78
Total Net Yards	440	531
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.4	6.8
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-51	9-93
Punts-Yards	5-206	5-224
Avg. Per Punt	41.2	44.8
Punt Returns-Yards	3-93	2-36
Interceptions-Yards	2-0	1-18
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	6-90	5-117
Possession Time	27:59	32:01

### Scoring

**TT** — Wes Welker 85-yard punt return (Robert Treece kick)  
**NU** — Jon Bowling 27-yard pass from Eric Crouch (Josh Brown kick)  
**NU** — Judd Davies 25-yard run (Brown kick)  
**TT** — Treece 35-yard field goal  
**NU** — Wilson Thomas 19-yard pass from Crouch (Brown kick)  
**TT** — Treece 42-yard field goal  
**NU** — Thomas 35-yard pass from Crouch (Brown kick)  
**TT** — Anton Paige 1-yard pass from Kliff Kingsbury (Treece kick)  
**TT** — Ricky Williams 12-yard run (Paige pass from Kingsbury)  
**NU** — Crouch 7-yard run (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Brown 33-yard field goal  
**TT** — Treece 31-yard field goal  
**NU** — Brown 36-yard field goal  
**Att.** — 77,838  
**Temp.** — 64



Tight end Jon Bowling's first catch of the season was a 27-yard touchdown reception that tied the score at 7-7.

## 2001 SEASON STATS

### RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Diedrick, D.	7	149	871	124.4	9
Crouch, E.	8	136	777	97.1	14
Collins, T.	8	68	480	60.0	4
Davies, J.	8	33	206	25.8	4
Grixby, D.	5	22	86	17.2	0
Kriewald, S.	7	12	65	9.3	0
Davis, J.	8	8	61	7.6	1
Lord, J.	5	20	41	8.2	1
Cornelsen, B.	7	2	33	4.7	0
Stuntz, M.	7	1	25	3.6	0

### PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	8	65-125-5	58.0	986	7
Lord, J.	5	5-8-1	62.5	65	0

### RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Thomas, W.	8	22	394	17.9	49.2	3
Wistrom, T.	7	18	273	15.2	39.0	2
Gibson, J.	8	12	194	16.2	24.2	1
Collins, T.	8	10	93	9.3	11.6	0
Bowling, J.	7	2	41	20.5	5.9	1

### FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, J.	7	5	3	38
DeAngelis, S.	7	3	2	21

### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	34	1,507	44.3	60

### PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Groce, D.	22	331	15.0	34	0
Craver, K.	17	183	10.8	31	0

### KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	15	412	27.5	43	0

### DEFENSE

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Burrow, J.	8	12	31	43	9-21	0	1.5-9
Craver, K.	8	28	14	42	2-3	2-73	0
Booker, D.	8	23	15	38	1-1	1-18	0
Vedral, M.	8	17	20	37	4-10	1-0	1-1
Shanley, S.	8	18	19	37	5-16	0	1.5-9
Ruud, B.	8	12	24	36	6-15	0	0.5-3
Kelsay, C.	8	12	13	25	11-35	0	3-19
McPherson, L.	8	18	7	25	3-11	1-0	1-8
Ricketts, P.	8	15	9	24	0	0	0
Bland, P.	8	8	14	22	1-2	0	0
Slecht, J.	8	7	14	21	3-9	0	1-7
Adams, D.	8	10	10	20	5-33	0	4-30

### TEAM STATISTICS

Total Offensive Yards	3,761	2,046				
Plays	590	545				
Average Per Play	6.4	3.8				
Average Per Game	470.1	255.8				
Net Rushing Yards	2,710	555				
Attempts	470	251				
TDs Rushing	34	4				
Net Passing Yards	1,051	1,491				
Completions	70	128				
Average Per Pass	8.8	5.1				
Average Per Catch	15.0	11.6				
Average Per Game	131.4	186.4				
TDs Passing	7	4				
Sacks By Yards	28-233	6-46				
Fumbles-Lost	21-11	18-6				
Penalties-Yards	48-471	54-421				
<b>Scoring</b>	<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>OT</b>	<b>TOT</b>
NU	113	79	61	58	0	311
Opponents	30	32	17	10	0	89

### Individual Leaders

#### TEXAS TECH

##### RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Williams, R.	9	55	6.1	20	1
Welker, W.	1	7	7.0	7	0
Kingsbury, K.	7	5	0.7	25	0

##### PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Kingsbury, K.	33-63-1	52.4	353	1
Hartfield, P.	1-1-0	100.0	20	0

##### RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Francis, C.	11	169	15.4	45	0
Peters, M.	6	61	10.2	22	0
Williams, R.	5	18	3.6	12	0
Welker, W.	4	47	11.7	21	0
Paige, A.	4	40	10.0	17	1
Roberts, C.	2	22	11.0	13	0
Scovell, K.	2	16	8.0	12	0

##### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Greathouse, C.	5	206	41.2	54

##### PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Welker, W.	3	93	31.0	85	1

##### KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
McCann, I.	3	83	27.9	31	0
Wesley, J.	2	4	2.0	3	0
Welker, W.	1	3	3.0	3	0

##### DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Smith, M.	7	5	12	0	0	0
Aycock, R.	6	5	11	0	0	0
Curtis, K.	7	3	10	0	2-0	0
Hawkins, J.	6	2	8	0	0	0
Flugence, L.	3	1	4	0	0	0
Hunt, A.	1	3	4	1-1	0	0
Anderson, L.	1	3	4	0	0	0
Hanson, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Johnson, C.J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Sailor, R.	2	0	2	0	0	0
McKinney, R.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Norman, J.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Boyd, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Ross, R.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Torelli, A.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Davis, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Page, J.	1	0	1	1-2	0	0
Loper, D.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Johnson, B.J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
McLendon, P.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Watson, H.	0	1	1	0	0	0

Williams, R.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Harmon, C.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Peters, M.	0	1	1	0	0	0

#### NEBRASKA

##### RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Diedrick, D.	20	157	7.8	35	0
Crouch, E.	21	105	5.0	13	1
Collins, T.	7	41	5.9	12	0
Davies, J.	1	25	25.0	25	1
Kastl, P.	3	13	4.3	8	0

##### PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	10-22-2	45.5	196	3

##### RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Thomas, W.	4	76	19.0	35	2
Bowling, J.	2	41	20.5	27	1
Collins, T.	1	27	27.0	27	0
Kastl, P.	1	19	19.0	19	0
Cornelsen, B.	1	18	18.0	18	0
Gibson, J.	1	15	15.0	15	0

##### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	5	224	44.8	52

##### PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Groce, D.	2	36	18.0	19	0

##### KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	5	117	23.4	32	0

##### DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
McPherson, L.	7	1	8	0	0	0
Booker, D.	5	2	7	0	1-18	0
Swiney, E.	5	0	5	1-1	0	0
Shanley, S.	4	1	5	0	0	0
Ricketts, P.	3	2	5	0	0	0
Craver, K.	3	1	4	0	0	0
Slecht, J.	3	0	3	1-7	0	1-7
Brown, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Vedral, M.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Kelsay, C.	2	1	3	2-9	0	1-8
Clanton, J.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Groce, D.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Ruud, B.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Bland, P.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Adams, D.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bingham, R.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Ringenberg, K.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Wichmann, J.P.	1	0	1	1-10	0	1-10
Burrow, J.	1	0	1	1-6	0	0



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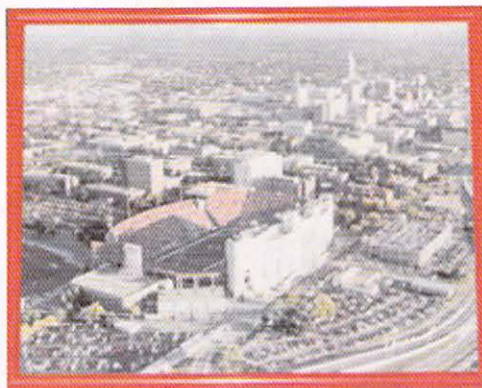
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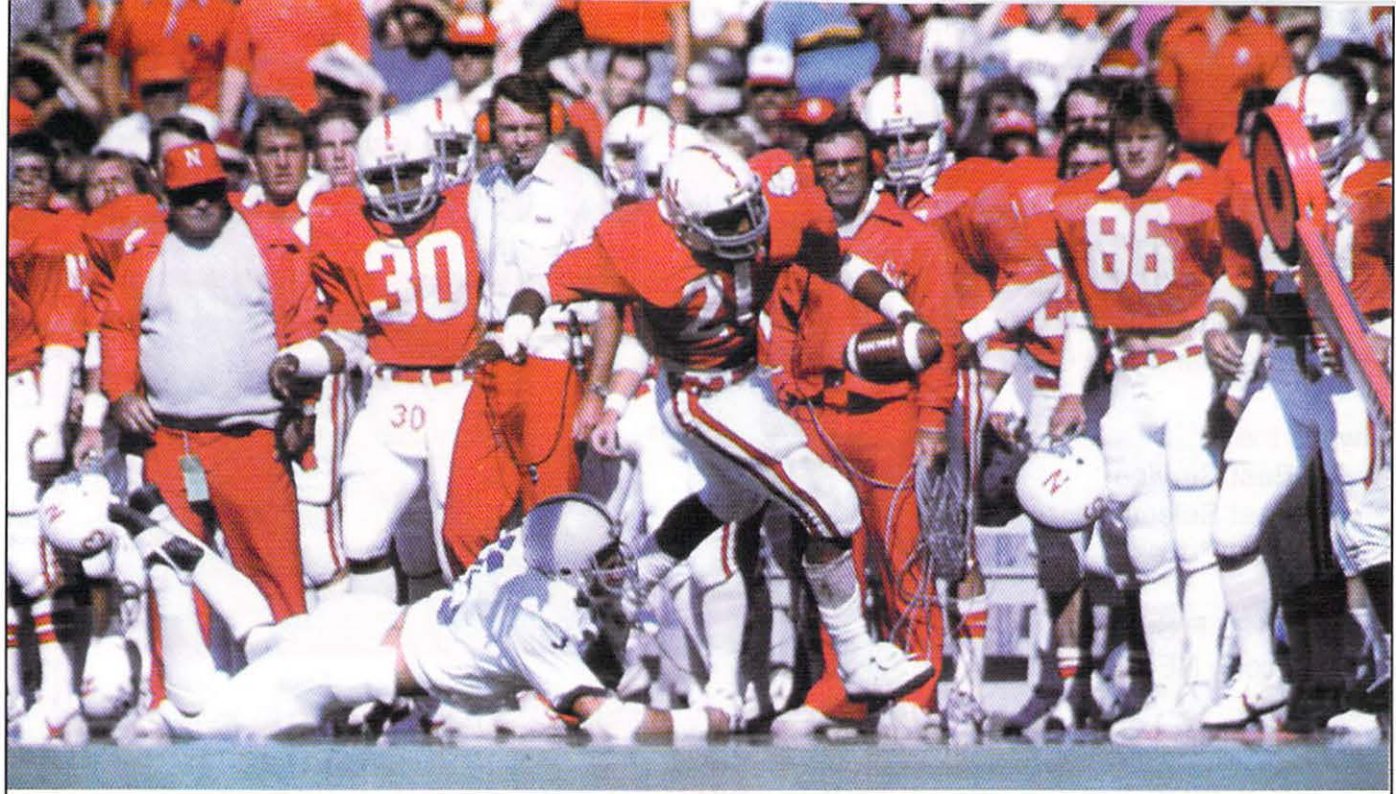
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Junior I-back Roger Craig (21) put the Huskers ahead 7-3 with a 2-yard touchdown run early in the second quarter of Nebraska's Sept. 26, 1981, game against Penn State at Memorial Stadium. Craig carried 24 times for 121 yards, but Penn State's Curt Warner gained a career-high 238 yards, and the Nittany Lions scored twice in the fourth quarter for a 30-24 victory.

# Nittany Lions Frustrate NU

## ***Cornhuskers' 1-2 start in '81 embarrassing to Osborne***

**By Mike Babcock**

**T**om Osborne's Hall of Fame coaching career was built on attention to detail. Anything could be significant in determining the outcome of a game. One never

knew until it was over.

Consider Nebraska's 30-24 loss against Penn State in 1981. The Cornhuskers were outscored 10-0 in the fourth quarter. But the game might have turned on something that occurred early on.

Jim Corbeil, a Nebraska special teams player, was shaken up on the opening kickoff, and the coaches assumed he would be sidelined for the rest of the game. So when Penn State failed to pick up a first down on its first possession, a replacement for Corbeil was sent in on the punt return team.

The problem was, no one told

Corbeil, who went on the field as well.

The Cornhuskers would have begun their first series near mid-field, after Penn State's punt into the wind, if not for having 12 players on the return team. Instead, Penn State got the ball back, first-and-10 at its own 32-yard line. Nine plays later, Brian Franco kicked his first of five field goals.

The nullified punt was "as big a play as there was in the game," Osborne said afterward.

It was big, but it certainly wasn't the only factor in Nebraska's second loss in three games. The Cornhuskers



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hadn't lost two of their first three games since 1960, when Osborne was still playing with the NFL's Washington Redskins. "I'm embarrassed to be 1-2," he told reporters.

His embarrassment was based as much on how his team had played, as it was on the losses themselves. Nebraska had turned over the ball five times in a 10-7, opening-game loss at Iowa, then rebounded to beat Florida State 34-14 in Lincoln, despite five more turnovers.

The Penn State game was more of the same. The Cornhuskers fumbled six times in the first half, losing three, and had one pass intercepted. Combine that with Penn State tailback Curt Warner's 238 rushing yards, and it was a wonder the Nittany Lions still needed Franco's kicks to win.

A subplot to Nebraska's distressing tendency to self-destruct during non-conference play in 1981 was a quarterback controversy that wouldn't be resolved until the week after the Penn State game.

The controversy involved senior Mark Mauer, junior Nate Mason and sophomore Turner Gill, whom a majority of Cornhusker fans had already determined should be the starter.

Mauer began the season as the No. 1 quarterback, but was demoted to No. 3 after the Iowa loss. "The fans want Gill," Mason said the next week. But Mason started against Florida State, with Gill seeing his first action early in the second quarter, and losing a fumble that set up a Seminole touchdown.

The fans' fascination with Gill was "partly the product of the press from freshman ball," Osborne said at

the weekly Extra Point Club luncheon on the Monday after the Iowa game.

Gill had completed 34-of-52 passes, without an interception, for 679 yards and eight touchdowns and had rushed for 302 yards and five touchdowns on 51 carries on the freshman-junior varsity. Osborne said he was convinced Gill would be a great player, "but I want him to play when he's ready."

"I think I'm ready," Gill told a reporter.

Ready or not, he was back where he began the season — third on the depth chart — for the Penn State game. Mason would start, Osborne

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said. But, he added, the quarterback race wasn't over. He would continue to evaluate Mauer and Gill and make changes, as he deemed appropriate.

Penn State came to Lincoln for the third of a four-game series, having lost the first two, 42-17 at Lincoln in 1979 and 21-7 at State College the previous season. Coach Joe Paterno's Nittany Lions were No. 3 in the Associated Press poll, while Nebraska was No. 15, after starting the season at No. 7.

Despite the rich traditions of the programs, ABC passed on televising the game, opting for Minnesota-Oregon instead, a decision that drew some post-practice criticism from

Osborne.

The game was televised, however, on a delayed basis by the upstart ESPN cable network, which sent its top announcing team of Jim Simpson and analyst Bud Wilkinson to Lincoln.

Mason started at quarterback but had problems handling the ball and gave way to Mauer after the first series of the second half. Mauer threw touchdown passes of 9 yards to tight end Jamie Williams and 16 yards to split end Scott Woodard for a 24-20 lead going into the fourth quarter.

But the Cornhuskers couldn't hold on. The victory was No. 143 of

Paterno's career.

Even though many factors contributed to the loss, the quarterback controversy continued to dominate the headlines. The situation "certainly isn't real stable," Osborne admitted.

The week after the Penn State game, Mason dropped out of contention because of an ankle problem that had bothered him during winter conditioning and through spring practice and had deteriorated to the point that surgery — and a medical redshirt — seemed to be his best option.

Mauer started the next game against Auburn at Memorial Stadium, but an uninspired performance left the Cornhuskers trailing 3-0 at halftime and even elicited some boos from the crowd of 76,423.

Gill came off the bench in the second half to rally Nebraska to a 17-3 victory and then got his first start a week later in the Cornhuskers' Big Eight opener against Colorado in Lincoln. He responded by completing nine-of-14 passes for 178 yards and four touchdowns in a 59-0 victory.

Under Gill's direction, Nebraska gained 719 total yards and picked up an NCAA-record 42 first downs. It was apparent the quarterback controversy had finally been resolved.

The Cornhuskers swept through their conference schedule, with Mauer directing a 37-14 victory at Oklahoma after Gill was sidelined by a lower leg injury against Iowa State. But they came up short against Clemson in the Orange Bowl, which, if they had won, might have given them a national title.

Despite the 1-2 start, Osborne maintained a sense of humor. Devaney was honored with a Hall of Fame induction ceremony at halftime of the Penn State game, and Osborne told the next week's Extra Point Club luncheon: "Bob said now that he's in, he thought maybe he could get me in."

But, Osborne added: "He hasn't mailed his letter yet."

Devaney could have mailed a letter on Osborne's behalf. Osborne would coach for 16 more seasons, and during those 16-plus seasons, his teams would be a combined 179-28-1 (.863). ■



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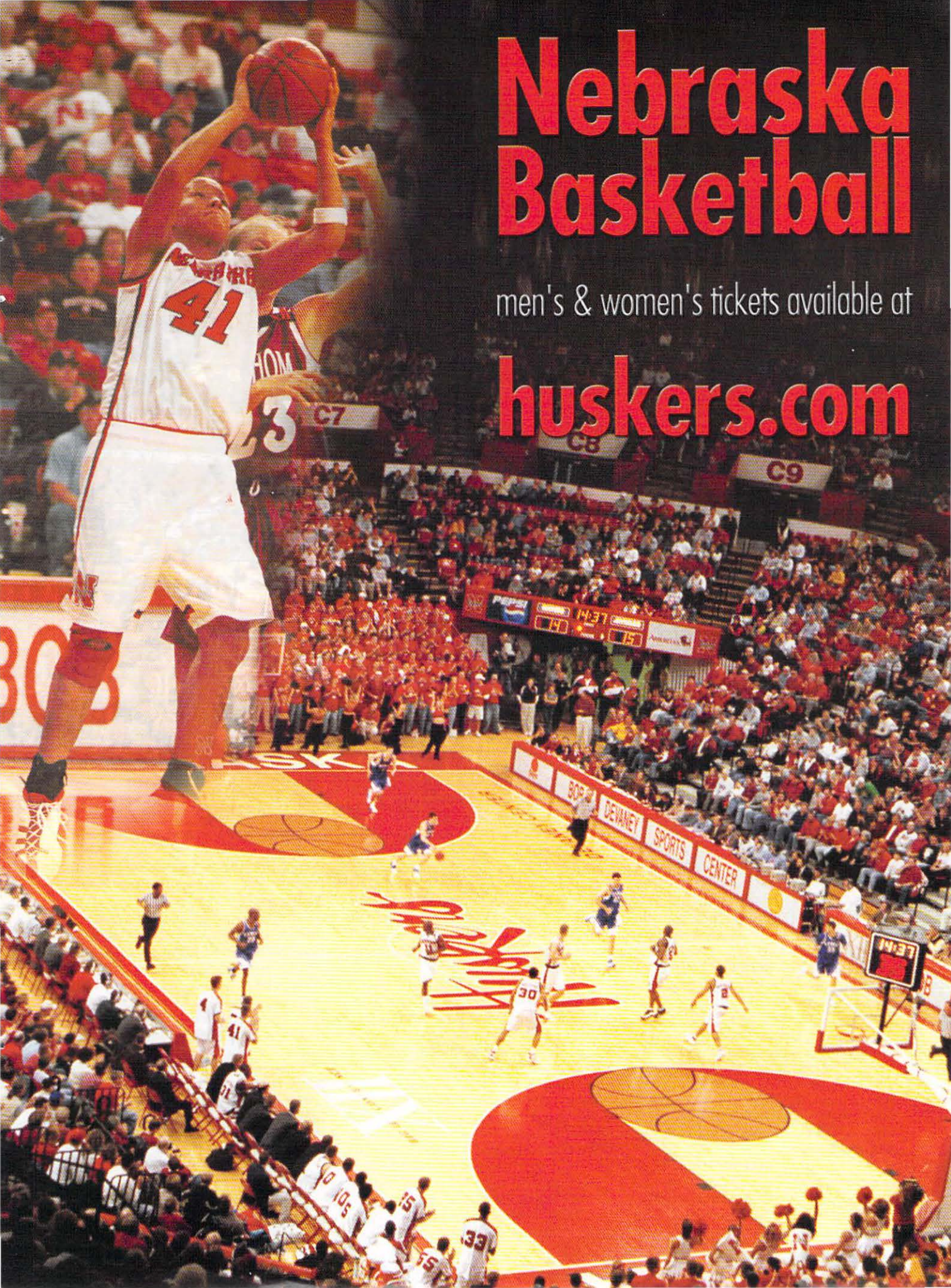
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Bill Janssen, currently a sales manager for Ameritas, based in Lincoln, was a starting defensive tackle on the 1971 national championship team.



## Shared Experience

***Chemistry matched talent on '70, '71 national champs***

***By Mike Babcock***

**B**ill Janssen has the fight preserved on 8-millimeter, black and white film. The fighters are swinging fast and furious at the end because the movie camera's batteries were dying.

The fight, which was staged in a makeshift ring on the lower level of the north fieldhouse at Memorial Stadium, took place in late 1970 or early 1971. The exact date isn't important.

The combatants were sophomore scholarship players on the Nebraska football team, fullback Jim Carstens and quarterback Bob Jones. Both were from Illinois. Carstens from Glen Ellyn and Jones from Oaklawn. They were always "on each other, good-naturedly," said Janssen.

A common theme in their exchanges concerned which of the two was tougher. The boxing match, without sanction of the coaches, was arranged to settle the matter once and

for all.

A ring was roped off, and each fighter had an entourage, including trainers and cut men.

Center Doug Jamail, wearing a rented tuxedo, made the pre-fight introductions with a megaphone, suspended above the ring. Safety Tom McClelland carried the round cards.

"We must have had 200 people there," said center Doug Dumler, another Chicago-area player who served as Carstens' trainer. The fight quickly degenerated, with the rounds being reduced from 3 minutes to about 30 seconds each, "with five minutes in between," Dumler said.

The film shows Boyd Epley, Nebraska's director of athletic performance, in the audience. The former Cornhusker pole vaulter was just beginning to show football players the value of weight training.

The film also clearly shows the combatants' enthusiasm exceeding their boxing skills. At one point during the fight, Carstens, whose teammates gave him the nickname "Earth" because (according to Janssen) he looked like a giant earthworm, puts his fists together and runs at Jones.

"They literally pounded each other," Janssen said.

Despite that, and even though the coaches might have intervened had they known — or maybe they did know and weren't inclined to stop it — the fight illustrates an important element of Nebraska's national championship teams in 1970 and 1971. Their chemistry matched their talent.

"There was a camaraderie that a lot of teams were lacking," said Janssen, who would be a captain along with Dumler on Coach Bob Devaney's final team a year later, in 1972.

That camaraderie included coaches, though in a different way. Defensive line coach Monte Kiffin, for example, would run stadium steps with his players and could be as unpredictable as those he coached. Once after a heavy rain, "he sprints and then slides, and there's a big 'rooster tail,'" Janssen said.

Janssen didn't play on the 1970 team. He was in line to be the starting center until a broken arm sidelined him before the opening game, leaving the No. 1 job to Dumler. Janssen was moved to defensive tackle in the spring of 1971 and earned a starting job, which he never relinquished.

Despite his success, however, he has never traded on his Nebraska football background during his working career.



He is currently a sales manager for Ameritas, based in Lincoln.

But his resume includes a variety of jobs following a brief attempt at pro football. He spent a couple of weeks in training camp with the Pittsburgh Steelers of Joe Greene and L.C. Greenwood, as an eighth-round draft pick, then tried the World Football League before moving on.

Among other things, he was an assistant freshman football coach at Nebraska. He worked for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, sold agricultural equipment and was a broker.

He is proud of having played for the Cornhuskers, including a 1971 team that, 30 years later, is still considered among the best in college football history. But "I don't want to lead with that," he said. "People in Nebraska have fantastic memories, and it's a mutual thing (to discuss).

"It might be a credible factor. Nebraska is a big family. And football is a common theme. So a lot of my teammates lead with that. But I don't necessarily believe in doing it."

On the other hand, the competitiveness that enabled him to succeed on the football field has served him well in business. "It has changed my life for the better, no doubt about it," he said.

His tenacity can be traced not only to football but also to wrestling, in which he competed at Red River High School in Grand Forks, N.D. In wrestling, "you don't have others to help you," he said.

Devaney, an amateur boxer, liked to see wrestling on a recruit's resume. Though football is a team game, it depends on unrelenting individual effort, which an unforgettable drill reinforced.

The drill took place on the north fieldhouse handball courts, as part of an off-season conditioning class. Players were paired off, and the object of the drill was to gain possession of an ax handle with rubber cushions on each end. The competitors began on knees, on a wrestling mat, with both hands on the handle. "You couldn't let go or hit the other guy," said Janssen. "Anything else was legal."

The tugging and pulling began at the sound of a whistle and lasted only a brief time. If one of the competitors took control of the ax handle, he had to sprint with it to a wall "once or twice," Janssen said. "It was a pretty wicked game. I remember biting a big chunk out of my check once."

Such shared experience, or misery, drew the players closer together.

Janssen remembers the games, in detail, according to his former teammates. He can recall conversations and the minutiae of daily life that quickly fades with the passing of time. "Bill

seemed to be more attuned to those things. He was so much more sensitive to everybody," said Dumler.

But the relationships among teammates transcended everything else.

Janssen stays in touch with several players on the 1971 team, including Jeff Kinney, who takes credit for giving him the nickname "Shot." "It started out as 'Cheapshot,'" Janssen said.

During practice one day, when Janssen was playing linebacker, he tackled Kinney near the sideline. Kinney claims he was 5 yards out of bounds, a fact Janssen still disputes.

"He might have been a hair out of bounds," said Janssen.

Kinney, who sells securities, occasionally visits Janssen's office, and Janssen said he knows Kinney is there before he sees his former teammate because "I can hear him say, 'Where's

'Cheapshot'?"

There are many with whom Janssen has lost contact, such as Jamail, the ring announcer for the Carstens-Jones bout. Jamail was the "class cut-up," according to Dumler.

The back-up center from Bellaire, Texas, would tape his hands, wrap a towel around his neck, pull on paisley, Everlast boxing trunks up to his armpits and shadow box around the field before the team started pre-practice calisthenics. "The coaches let it happen," said Janssen.

"You needed a tension breaker." And Jamail filled that role, helping to hold the team together.

The boxing match served that function, too.

"We had a feeling we had a great team," Janssen said.


And they also had the chemistry. ■

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Scott Brown

Nebraska players celebrate after scoring their 30th point in a game earlier this season. Points are easier to come by with the move from side-out scoring to rally scoring. Games one through four now are played to 30 points as opposed to 15.

**SIDEOUT**

**By Todd Henrichs**

# Closer Games

***Nebraska gives up more points after switch to rally scoring***

**N**ebraska seemed to have the team perfectly suited for rally scoring.

The Huskers have tough and effective servers able to put all kinds of pressure on the opposing team. Nebraska has the nation's biggest, most intimidating block and dynamic attackers

suddenly empowered to score on any point.

So why were the Huskers up in arms when a change from side-out scoring was proposed a year ago? Jenny Kropp says it was as much about tradition as anything else.

"I wish it would have stayed the same, but since it's changed you just have to deal with it," said Kropp, NU's senior co-captain. "When you play teams that aren't as good, they'll get more points just on your mistakes. Games are closer, and that makes things totally different."

Well not that different. Not at Nebraska, at least.

The defending national champions won 15 of their first 16 matches under the new rules this season, sweeping 13 of their opponents and taking command of the Big 12 race even before the midway point of the conference slate.

In reality, the only outwardly obvious change is the scores themselves. Collegiate matches are still best-of-five, but games one through four now are played to 30 points as opposed to 15.

The change was made to conform to rules already in use at the Olympics, in other international competitions and in youth divisions



across the United States. Even NCAA men's teams have been playing with rally scoring for the last year in hopes of attracting new fans and increased television coverage.

In rally scoring, a point is awarded for every kill, every block and every hitting error regardless of which team served. Likewise, every missed serve — Nebraska erred 281 times last season — is now a point.

"You have to find a fine line of how tough you can serve and keep your errors low," Nebraska's Nancy Metcalf said.

Like most, Metcalf expected rally scoring would shorten games. That hasn't necessarily proven true.

For certain, rally scoring virtually eliminates the possibility of a three-hour marathon match. Conversely, the days of a one-hour quickie went out with the old rules.

When Nebraska swept Kansas 30-16, 30-16, 30-17 earlier this season, all three games would have ended sooner had side-out scoring been in play. Under side-out rules, only the serving team could score a point on any given rally.

The same match with Kansas a

year ago would have resulted in more impressive scores of 19-5, 16-3, 16-3. This year's match lasted one hour, 21 minutes.

"In traditional scoring, it's easier to make long runs," Nebraska Coach John Cook said. "That's what we were so good at last year. We could make a five-point run in a game and really break it open."

"In rally scoring, it's difficult to make those runs because if they side out, they get a point, or you miss a serve, they get a point. It's hard to make big runs, which means there's going to be closer games. And you're going to have to execute really well from 25 (points) on."

Ultimately rally scoring will improve the level of play, predicts Coach Mick Haley of Southern California. Haley was coach of the U.S. Olympic team last year and at the same time a close observer of college play. He wasn't always impressed by what he saw.

"Teams gave up an awful lot of points," Haley said. "Teams will execute at a higher level this year knowing full well they can't waltz around through side-out score. Intensity will

be higher."

When asked last season, NU fans voiced their overwhelming opposition to the rule change.

Fears were that rally scoring would eliminate some of the dramatic comebacks that dot Nebraska volleyball history. Just last season, the Huskers rallied in game four to extend South Carolina and keep alive hopes of a national championship.

Coming from behind is predictably difficult, but not impossible, as Nebraska has shown several times throughout this season. The Huskers rallied to win games after trailing 9-2 versus UCLA, 19-14 at Pacific, 18-12 and 24-20 at Kansas State and 6-0 in the season opener with Hawaii.

Cook, however, fears that by falling behind so often, his team is flirting with disaster.

"If a team comes out flat or has an off night, there is a great chance for an upset," he said. "We've just been fortunate to win all of those games."

"When I look around at the scores in the country, there's just a lot more four- and five-game matches this year. I think it's because of rally score." ■

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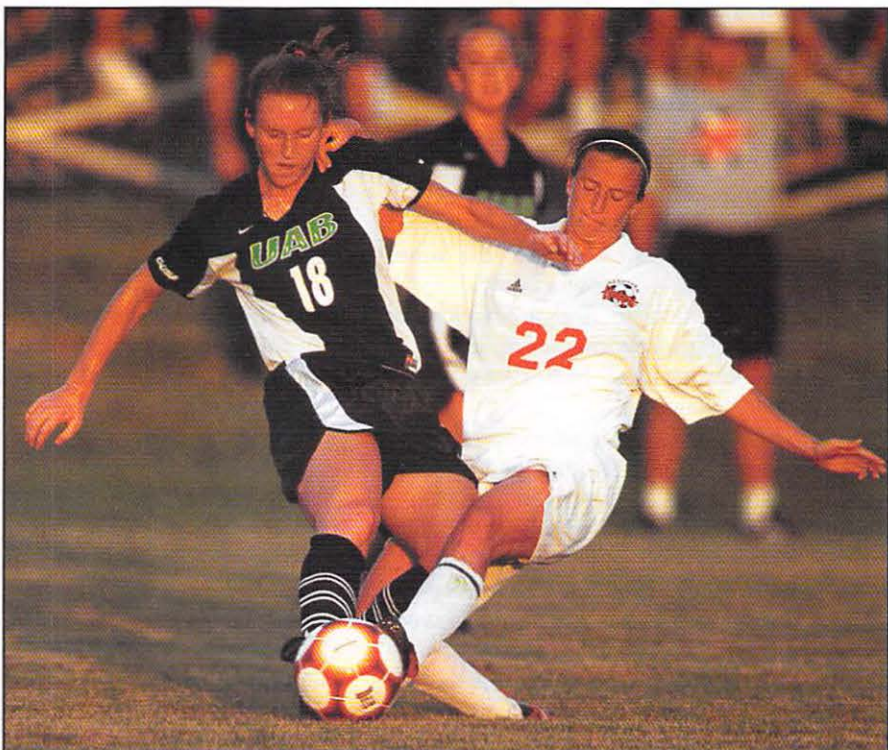
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## Getting Their Kicks



Two of the Nebraska soccer team's leading scorers have been junior Christine Latham (left) and senior Meghan Anderson. Latham has scored a team-high 24 points and Anderson 14. Anderson, who is just one point shy of Lindsay Eddleman's school-record 127 points, recently became just the 29th NCAA Division-I athlete to record 40 career goals and 40 career assists. No other Big 12 athlete has accomplished the feat.

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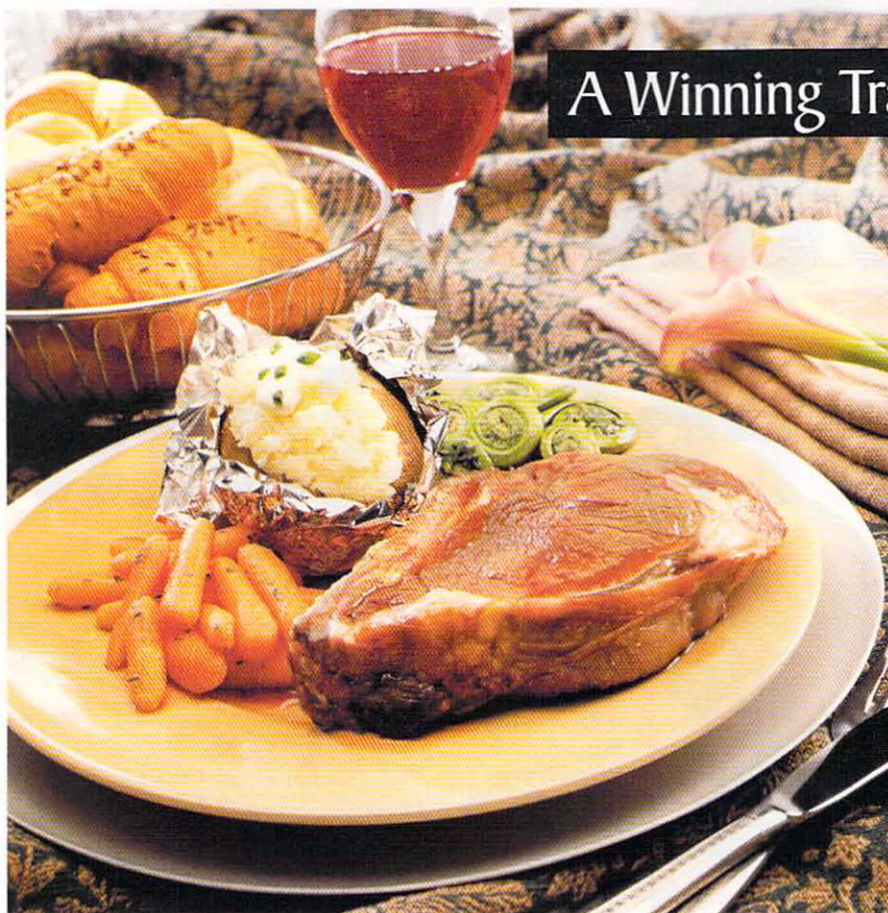
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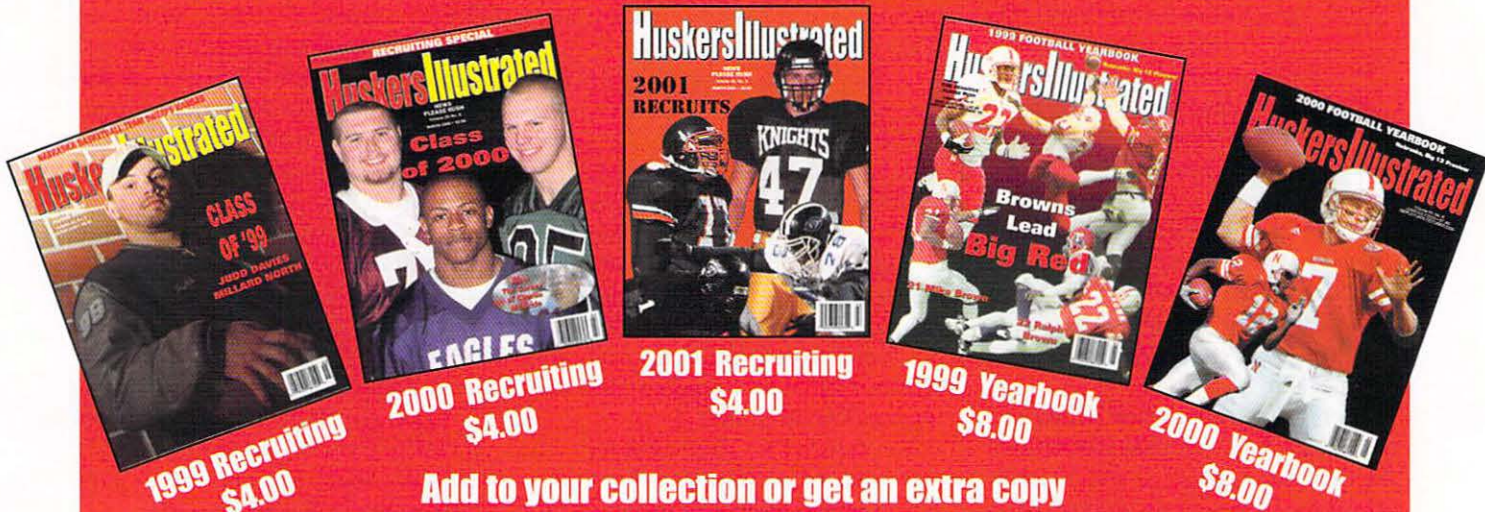
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# NU Still Tops Players' Lists

*Athletes who visited for Notre Dame game continue to weigh options*

**By Doug Horwich**



Salt Lake City defensive tackle prospect E. Haloti Ngata was impressed with the academic support program at Nebraska

**N**ebraska went into the season with only five oral commitments, and now stands at six commitments two months into the season.

Because new commitments frequently come during or very soon after a player's official on-campus visit, the Huskers are not likely to see any additional commitments until they've had a chance to bring more prospects to Lincoln.

Nebraska coaches had scheduled a handful of visits for the weekend of the Oklahoma game, as well as a few others for home games against Texas Tech and Kansas State. However, the

blockbuster recruiting weekends at Nebraska will take place in December and January, as they have for years.

As is often the case with many of the country's top prospects, the majority of Nebraska's recruiting targets intend to take most, if not all, of their five allotted official visits.

The players who visited Nebraska as their first official visit during the weekend of the Notre Dame game have now had a chance to see some of their other choices, and the Huskers have managed to maintain the lead for all three.

Perhaps the top player on Nebraska's recruiting board is superstar defensive tackle E. Haloti Ngata (6-foot-4, 310, 5.0) of Highland High

School in Salt Lake City, Utah. Ngata visited the University of Washington during the weekend of Oct. 6 and came away very impressed.

Washington has become a formidable recruiting school under Coach Rick Neuheisel, and the fact that the Huskies won the battle for Nebraska's top two rush end prospects last season by signing Tui Alailefaleula and Kai Ellis made many Husker fans nervous when Ngata visited Seattle.

However, despite the fact that Ngata enjoyed his visit to Washington a great deal, it was not enough to replace Nebraska at the top of his wish list. Ngata was enamored with the idyllic setting of the Washington campus but was even more taken with Nebraska's academic support program, which will play a prominent role in his decision.

"The education support (at Washington) didn't seem as strong as Nebraska's," Ngata said. "It was still pretty good though."

Ngata is still deliberating a Nov. 30 visit to Oregon, but at this point, it appears that the Huskers and Huskies are in the driver's seat.

The battle for one of the nation's top defensive tackle prospects will also be impacted by family ties at both schools. With an aunt at Washington and cousin Manaia Brown at Nebraska, Ngata will have family nearby in either case. However, the idea of playing side-by-side with Brown, who also plays defensive tackle, is an attractive one to Ngata.

"I have an aunt who lives in

## Nebraska Commitments for 2002

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Curt Dukes	Newton (Newton-Conover), N.C.	6-2	210	QB
Matt Herian	Pierce, Neb.	6-5	225	TE
Mark LeFlore	Omaha (Central), Neb.	6-0	185	WR
Kurt Mann	Grand Island, Neb.	6-4 1/2	255	OL
Jay Moore	Elkhorn, Neb.	6-4 1/2	245	RE
Dane Todd	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	5-11 1/2	230	FB



Washington," he said, "but at Nebraska, Manaia would be playing with me, so that would kind of be better."

Ngata is reportedly the Huskers' No. 1 defensive recruiting target this year, and his commitment would represent a remarkable achievement for the Nebraska program, as it would mark the third time in the past five years that the Huskers were able to sign the top defensive prospect in the state of Utah.

Another top Husker recruiting target is running back Tre Smith (5-10, 190, 4.4) of Venice High School in Venice, Fla., who came close to committing to Nebraska during his official visit in early September.

"He absolutely loved his visit to Nebraska," Smith's mother said. "Tre is normally kind of a homebody, but he said that he had a lot of fun at Nebraska. He said that the team was really close and that he felt comfortable with everybody there. If Nebraska were closer to Florida, the recruiting process would likely already be over. That is where he would go for sure."

Smith is not fond of flying, and the distance between Florida and Nebraska certainly does not work in the Huskers' favor.

"Tre does not like to fly," his mother said. "He wasn't thrilled with his flight home from Nebraska. The World Trade Center tragedy didn't help his opinion of flying. If he goes to Nebraska, he will likely stay in Lincoln during vacations and holidays."

However, Smith loves the Husker offense, and unlike some schools, Nebraska is recruiting him strictly as an I-back.

"That is another factor which is pulling him toward Nebraska," Smith's mother said. "Florida wants him as an athlete, and they don't run the ball as much as Nebraska. However, I wouldn't be surprised if he went to Florida, just because it's in Florida and close to home. He is being open minded."

Smith has taken unofficial visits to Auburn, Florida and Florida State, and is also looking at Stanford, Miami and Vanderbilt. However, the Huskers, Tigers and Gators are the teams likely to make his final cut. If

# Offensive Targets on Huskers' List

By Rick Shaw

**N**ebbraska has landed commitments from some of the nation's finest offensive athletes. Five out of the Cornhuskers' six current oral commitments are projected to play on the offensive side of the ball.

The Huskers are off to a great start in signing an outstanding offensive recruiting class for 2002. However, their work is not yet done. Here is a look at 10 offensive athletes who are on Nebraska's short list to sign to letters of intent in February:

**1. Gerald Riggs Jr., running back (Chattanooga, Tenn.):** The Volunteers of Tennessee may have the inside track for the 6-foot, 220-pound speedster. However, Riggs will also visit LSU, Michigan, and Nebraska before making a final decision.

**2. David Horne, running back (Omaha, Neb.):** Horne is the most highly coveted recruit in the state of Nebraska in 2001. The recruiting battle for the 6-0, 195-pound Horne appears to be a three-team race between Nebraska, Colorado, and Michigan.

**3. David Richard, running back/fullback (St. Louis, Mo.):** The 6-foot-2, 220-pound Richard lists Tennessee and Nebraska as his top two schools, with Iowa, Illinois, and Colorado rounding out his top five.

**4. Tyrone Diggs, all-purpose back (Harrisburg, Pa.):** The 5-foot-10, 180-pound blue-chipper rushed for more than 1000 yards as a junior. Diggs favors the Huskers and has a December visit scheduled to Lincoln. Boston College, Notre Dame, Michigan State, and others are giving chase.

**5. Tre Smith, Running Back (Venice, Fla.):** Smith was the Junior Player of the Year in Florida in 2000. The 5-foot-11, 190-pound Floridian is leaning toward signing with Nebraska but will first take visits to Auburn, Florida, and Northwestern before making his final decision.

**6. Nathan Rhodes, offensive tackle (Bakersfield, Calif.):** The 6-foot-7, 310-pound Rhodes is considered by many to be the top offensive tackle prospect in the country. Rhodes will decide between UCLA, Michigan, Tennessee, Nebraska, and Washington.

**7. Max Jean-Gilles, offensive tackle (Miami Beach, Fla.):** Jean-Gilles is huge at 6-foot-5, 340 pounds and loves to play smash-mouth football. Miami, Nebraska, and Georgia are the early front-runners for this mammoth lineman from the Sunshine State.

**8. Stanley Daniels, offensive guard (San Diego, Calif.):** The 6-foot-4, 310-pound Daniels was impressed with his Sept. 8 visit to Lincoln. Nebraska is the team to beat, but Daniels will also visit Tennessee and Washington.

**9. Rob Smith, offensive guard (Fort Thomas, Ky.):** The 6-foot-5, 295-pound Smith is planning to visit Nebraska some time in December. Smith also likes Tennessee, Clemson, and South Carolina.

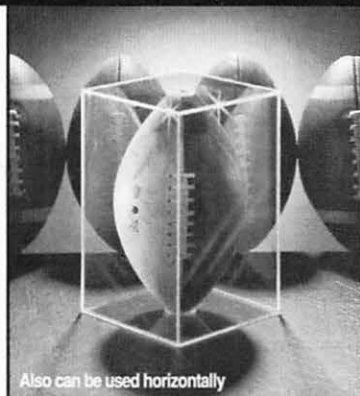
**10. Roshawn Pope, athlete (Galveston, Texas):** The 5-foot-11, 180-pound Pope plays quarterback in high school and would like to give that position a shot in college. Pope loves Nebraska's offensive style of football and favors the Huskers early. Nebraska will have to battle Arkansas, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and others for this athlete who could play a multitude of positions at the next level. ■



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the Huskers can overcome the distance factor with Smith, they have a great chance to get a commitment from one of the nation's most explosive athletes.

Ngata and Smith spent quite a bit of time together during their visit, along with offensive guard Stanley Daniels (6-4, 300, 5.2) of San Diego's Marian Catholic High School.

"My favorite is Nebraska," Daniels said a month after his Husker visit. "That is a bit unfair though, as they are the only school that I have visited thus far. I have high hopes for Washington and Tennessee as well."

All three players contemplated a Husker commitment during the weekend they were in Lincoln but were convinced by coaches and parents to take at least a few visits before deciding.

"I was going to commit to Nebraska," Daniels said, "but my coach told me that it wouldn't be smart. He wanted to be sure I carefully thought everything out and weighed all of my options."

Daniels said he felt very comfort-

able with Nebraska Coach Frank Solich.

"Coach Solich is probably the nicest coach that I've ever met," Daniels said. "When it comes to football though, he is down to business. I think at the end of my four years at Nebraska, I would walk out a man. Coach (Milt) Tenopir is the offensive line coach in Lincoln. He has coached seven Outland trophy winners and numerous all-Americans."

"If I get into that Nebraska program, I'm pretty sure that I can't do anything but succeed."

Daniels said that he has heard good things about some of the other colleges on his list.

"I like Coach Neuheisel of Washington," Daniels said. "He is a really good coach. Coach (Phil) Fulmer of Tennessee is great, too. I also have interest in USC. They were one of my favorite teams as a kid."

Nebraska's lead for Daniels will be tested in the coming weeks, as Tennessee and Washington do an outstanding job of hosting visiting recruits, but recruiting battles for elite prospects are rarely easy. ■

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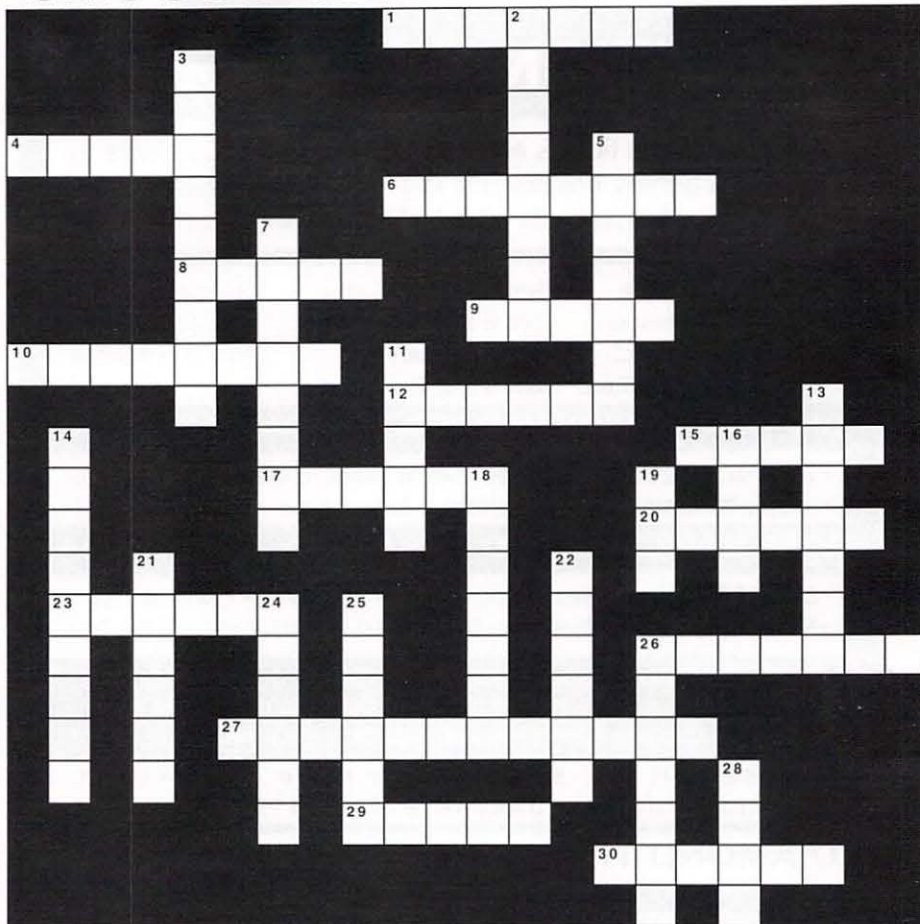
## ACROSS

- 1 Oklahoma nickname
- 4 Former Oklahoma coach
- 6 2000 national champion
- 8 NU's rating entering Texas Tech game
- 9 NU kickoff returner
- 10 Nov. 23 opponent
- 12 Scored first touchdown vs. Baylor
- 15 Kansas head coach
- 17 Oklahoma linebacker
- 20 NU's leading tackler
- 23 NU's No. 10 (defense)
- 26 1997 Lombardi Award winner
- 27 Oklahoma fight song
- 29 Wore permanently retired No. 60
- 30 NU's career total offense leader

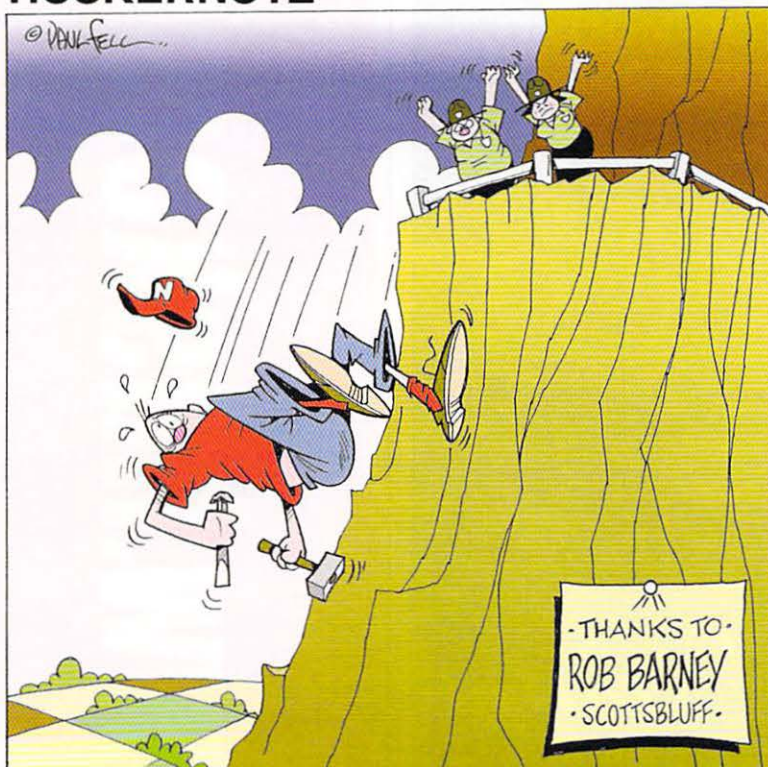
## DOWN

- 2 1994 national champion
- 3 Memorial Stadium playing surface
- 5 Leading rusher vs. Baylor
- 7 NU's leading rusher
- 11 Rush end with 2 sacks vs. Baylor
- 13 NU offensive line coach
- 14 Delayed NU-Baylor game
- 16 NU's No. 10 (offense)
- 18 1992 Outland Trophy winner
- 19 Network for Oklahoma game
- 21 NU leader in pancake blocks
- 22 1997 Outland Trophy winner
- 24 Oklahoma head coach
- 25 Oklahoma campus location
- 26 1994 Outland Trophy winner
- 28 Number of NU runners over 100 yards vs. Baylor

Answers in Nov. 3 issue



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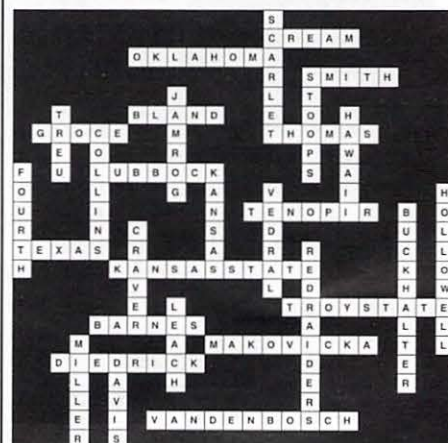
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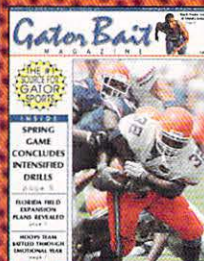




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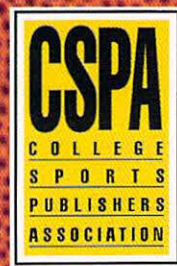
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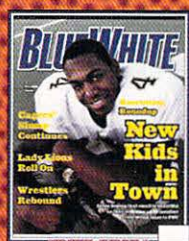


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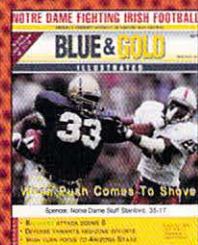


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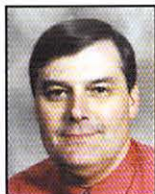
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## Some Similarities

***Bohl says latest victory a positive step for defense, but tackling, execution must improve against Oklahoma***



**Mike  
BABCOCK**

DURING THE WEEKLY teleconference on the Tuesday before the Texas Tech game, Nebraska Coach Frank Solich was asked if playing against the Red Raiders' passing offense would be good preparation for playing Oklahoma. The basis of the question was the fact that Mike Leach was Oklahoma's offensive coordinator before he became the head coach at Texas Tech two seasons ago.

Solich's response was predictable enough. He wasn't looking ahead to the Sooners. He was focused on Texas Tech. And besides, playing the Red Raiders two weeks before playing Oklahoma wasn't particularly helpful last season. Nebraska beat Tech 56-3 but lost to the Sooners 31-14.

Solich smiled as he answered the question. But there wasn't anything funny about it.

He was asked the question again after the Cornhuskers avoided a monumental upset by beating Texas Tech 41-31, before a largely disbelieving audience at Memorial Stadium.

"The offense in itself, there are some similarities," he conceded. "But also there are some differences. What you're seeing is, both teams have excellent offensive personnel."

The Sooners don't have a quarterback to match Kliff Kingsbury, however.

Nebraska defensive coordinator Craig Bohl echoed Solich in comparing Oklahoma's offense to Texas Tech's. "They're not really the same," he said. "But there are similarities."

Cornhusker cornerback DeJuan Groce had a differing opinion.

"There is a lot of comparison between Texas Tech and Oklahoma," he said.

He thought about it briefly then added, "It's pretty much the same offense, really."

To be overly concerned about Oklahoma's offense is probably to miss the point, however. If the Sooners are to successfully defend their national championship, they'll do so with a defense that has some outstanding individual players but so far not the kind of statistics you might expect.

Until Texas Tech flew into town, Nebraska's defense was more than a statistical match for Oklahoma's. But the Red Raiders' passing success is cause for concern.

"I didn't think our tackling was as sharp as it's been, or our execution," said Bohl.

Because the Sooners, like Texas Tech, spread out the defense, isolate defenders one-on-one, "we need to work on our tackling," Bohl said. "There were too many blown assignments."

Even so, there was reason to celebrate the victory. "We're going to look at it as a positive step for our

defense," he said. "We were playing a lot of defensive backs, a lot of combinations."

And that's how the defense will play Oklahoma. The game will come down to match-ups.

A best-case scenario from the fans' point of view, anyway, would have been a more decisive victory against Texas Tech. The confidence gained in seven victories might have been shaken some.

But then, the Sooners weren't all that impressive in beating Baylor, either. So maybe players on both teams were looking ahead just a little — though Nebraska I-back Dahrran Diedrick denied it.

"It was more than just telling people," he said. "We were getting ready for Texas Tech."

Diedrick will have to play well if the Cornhuskers are to be successful against Oklahoma. Because of the Sooners' speed on defense, it will be difficult to get to the outside. Nebraska will have to be able to run inside the tackles, run right at Oklahoma, and Diedrick is the I-back for that.

Among the positives in the Texas Tech game was that he wasn't among those who limped off the field. "I feel good going into the Oklahoma game next week," he said.

The Cornhuskers also will have to pass to keep Oklahoma from stacking eight or nine defenders at the line of scrimmage. Nebraska quarterback Eric Crouch threw well enough at times against Texas Tech to give the Sooners something to ponder as they study videotape during the week.

Crouch's repaired right shoulder appears strong. At least once during the Texas Tech game it was a little bit too strong, and he overthrew a wide-open Wilson Thomas.

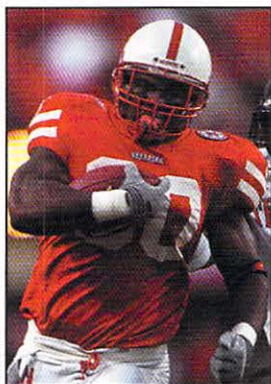
But he's been an efficient passer this season, and that will serve Nebraska well.

If the Cornhuskers have an edge against Oklahoma, it's Crouch. He's the difference-maker in an offense that he says has "gotten better each week." And the numbers bear that out.

Nebraska has rolled up 1,208 yards and 89 points the last two weeks. Granted, no one is suggesting there's any comparison between the defenses of Baylor and Texas Tech and Oklahoma's.

Nevertheless, the Cornhuskers have shown they can attack a defense in several ways.

So Nebraska's defense won't be the only one with issues to resolve this week. The Sooners haven't seen an offense quite like the one they'll see in Memorial Stadium on Saturday. ■

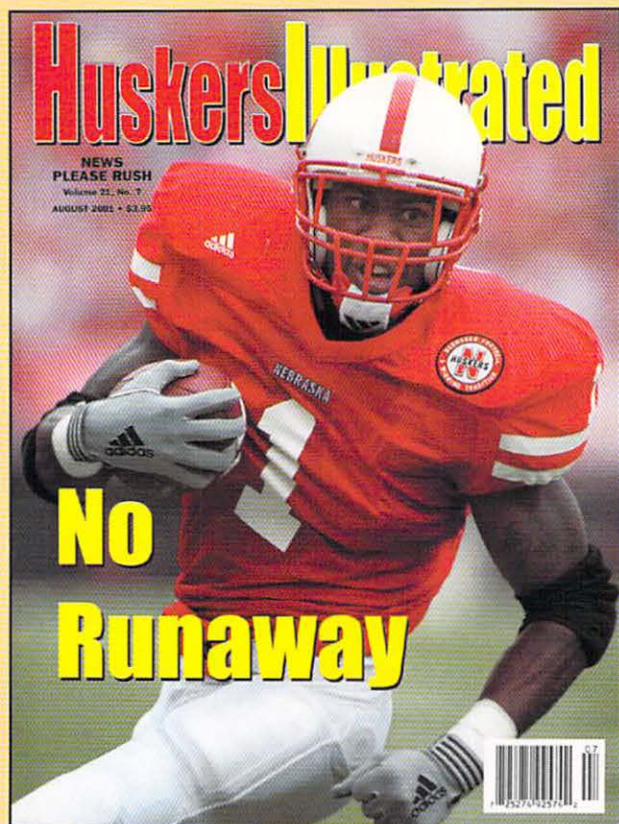
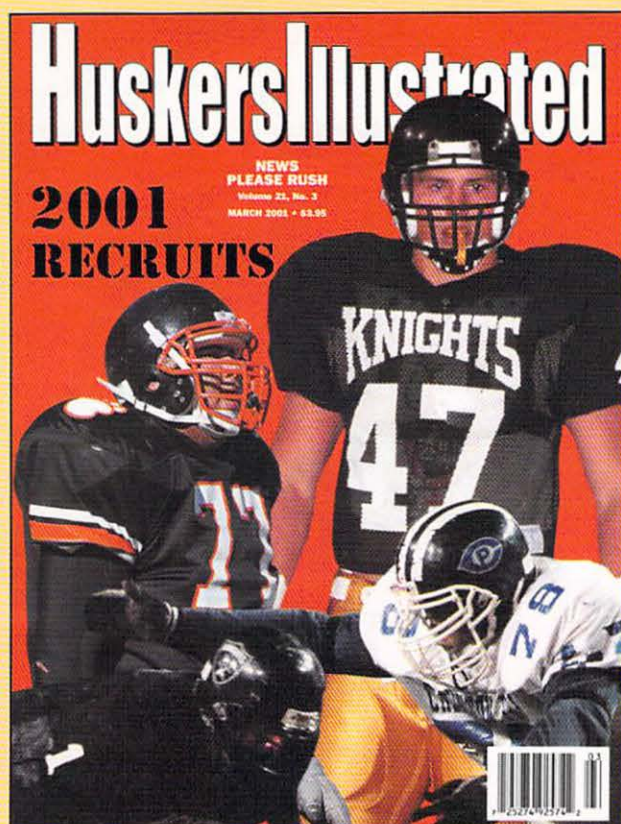


**I-back Dahrran Diedrick has three straight 100-yard games.**

**Mike Babcock** is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at [mdb@inetnebr.com](mailto:mdb@inetnebr.com) or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.



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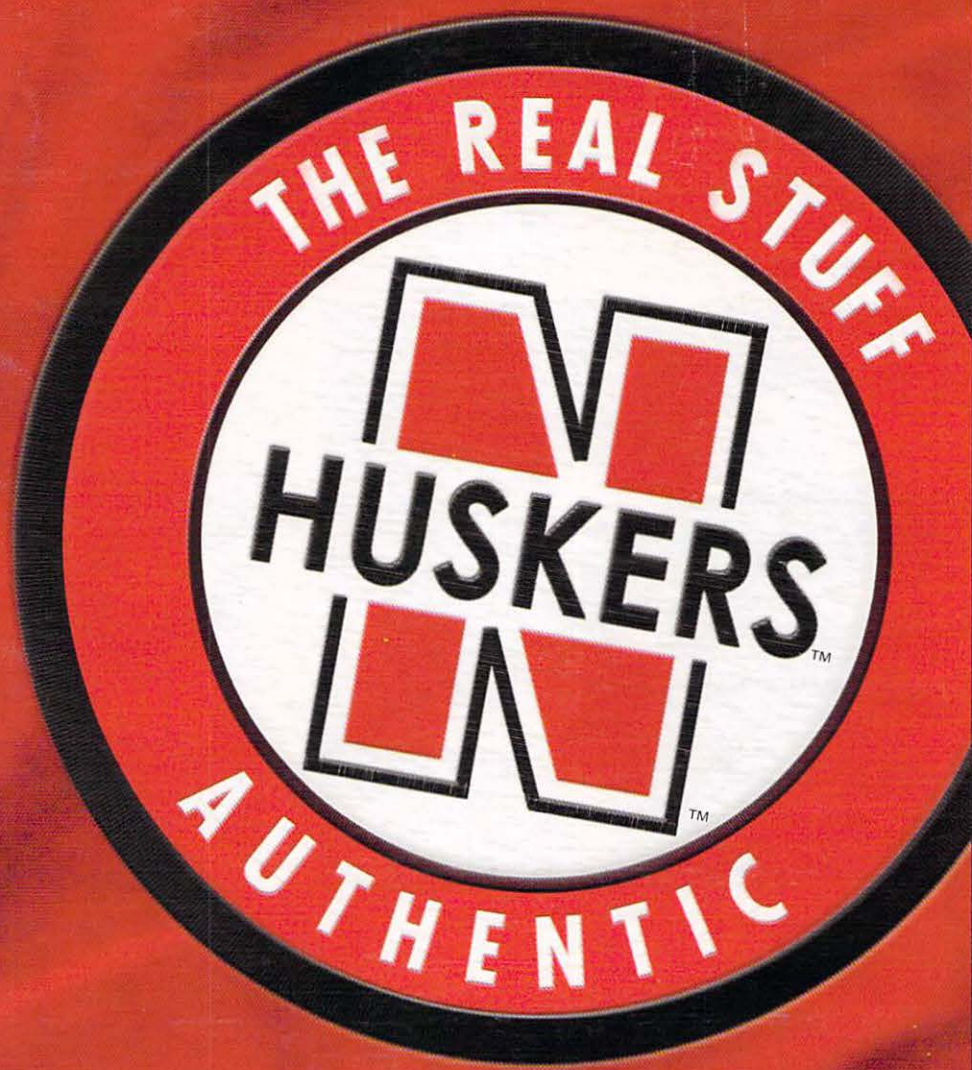
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